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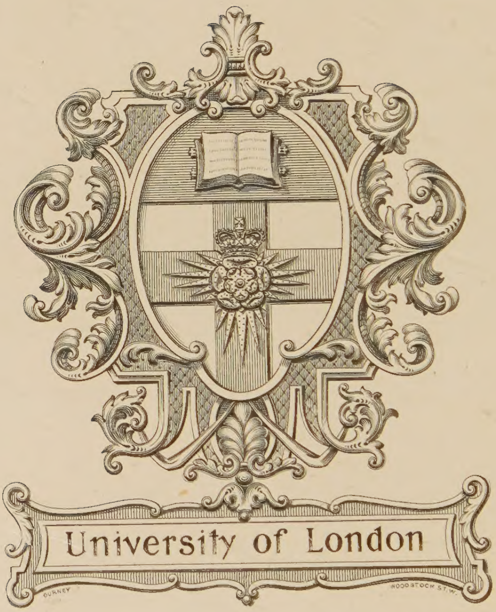
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THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(AUTHORISED EDITION),

FOURTH SERIES

THIRD SESSION OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

OF THE

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

8 EDWARD VII.

VOLUME CLXXXIII.

COMPRISING PERIOD FROM WEDNESDAY, TWENTY-NINTH DAY
OF JANUARY, 1908, TO TUESDAY, ELEVENTH DAY OF FEBRUARY, 1908.

FIRST VOLUME OF SESSION.

1908.

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CHRONOLOGY OF "THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES."

THE PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY contains all that can be collected of the Legislative History of this country from the Conquest to the close of the XVIIIth Century (1803), 36 vols. The chief sources whence these Debates are derived are the Constitutional History, 24 vols.; Sir Simonds D'Ewes' Journal; Debates of the Commons in 1620 and 1621; Chandler and Timberland's Debates, 22 vols.; Grey's Debates of the Commons, from 1667 to 1694, 10 vols.; Almon's Debates, 24 vols.; Debrett's Debates, 63 vols.; The Hardwicke Papers; Debates in Parliament by Dr. Johnson, &c., &c.

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OF THE

LORDS SPIRITUAL AND TEMPORAL

IN THE

THIRD SESSION OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

OF

THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

8 EDWARD VII. 1908.

NOTE.—*The Figures in the Margin refer to the corresponding Figures on the Roll.*

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468 Aberdare, Henry Campbell Lord

49 Abergavenny, William Marquess of

73 Abingdon, Montagu Arthur Earl of

397 Abinger, Shelley Leopold Laurence Lord

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530 Addington, Egerton Lord

44 Ailesbury, Henry Augustus Marquess of

46 Ailsa, Archibald Marquess of

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3 Albany, His Royal Highness Leopold Charles Edward George Albert Duke of

75 Albemarle, Arnold Allan Cecil Earl of

555 Aldenham, Alban George Henry Lord

478 Alington, Humphrey Napier Lord

615 Allendale, Wentworth Canning Blackett Lord

581 Allerton, William Lawies Lord

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156 Amherst, William Archer Earl

537 Amherst of Hackney, William Amhurst Lord

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190 Ancaster, Gilbert Henry Earl of

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30 Argyll, John Douglas Sutherland Duke of

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91 Aylesford, Charles Wightwick Earl of

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457 Balinhard, Charles Noel Lord. (*Earl of Southesk*)
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16 Bedford, Herbrand Arthur Duke of
296 Belhaven and Stenton, Alexander Charles Lord. (*Elected for Scotland*)
422 Bellew, Charles Bertram Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)
125 Belmore, Somerset Richard Earl of. (*Elected for Ireland*)
428 Belper, Henry Lord
72 Berkeley, Randal Mowbray Thomas Earl of
316 Berwick, Richard Henry Lord
587 Biddulph, Michael Lord
264 Birmingham, Charles Bishop of.
619 Blyth, James Lord
535 Blythswood, Archibald Campbell Lord
202 Bolingbroke and St. John, ——— Viscount
334 Bolton, William Thomas Lord
293 Borthwick, Archibald Patrick Thomas Lord. (*Elected for Scotland*)
303 Boston, George Florance Lord
273 Botreaux, Charles Edward Hastings Lord. (*Earl of Loudoun*)
523 Bowes, Claude George Lord. (*Earl of Strathmore and Kinghorn*)
297 Boyle, Charles Spencer Canning Lord. (*Earl of Cork and Orrery*)
489 Brabourne, Edward Lord
148 Bradford, George Cecil Orlando Earl of
448 Brancepeth, Gustavus William Lord. (*Viscount Boyne*)
20 Brandon, Alfred Douglas Duke of
521 Brassey, Thomas Lord
322 Braybrooke, Henry Lord
277 Braye, Alfred Thomas Townshend Lord
50 Breadalbane, Gavin Marquess of
223 Bridport, Arthur Wellington Alexander Nelson Viscount
45 Bristol, Frederick William Fane Marquess of
259 Bristol, George Forrest Bishop of
331 Brodrick, William St. John Fremantle Lord. (*Viscount Midleton*)
99 Brooke, Francis Richard Charles Guy Earl, and Earl of Warwick
436 Brougham and Vaux, Henry Charles Lord
145 Brownlow, Adelbert Wellington Brownlow Earl
100 Buckinghamshire, Sidney Carr Earl of
551 Burghclere, Herbert Coulstoun Lord
586 Burnham, Edward Levy Lord
519 Burton, Michael Arthur Lord
38 Bute, John Marquess of
287 Byron, George Frederick William Lord

C

116	Cadogan, George Henry Earl
182	Cairns, Wilfred Dallas Earl
332	Calthorpe, Augustus Cholmondeley Lord
41	Camden, John Charles Marquess
274	Camoys, Ralph Francis Julian Lord
159	Camperdown, Robert Adam Philips Haldane Earl of
4	Canterbury, Randall Thomas Archbishop of
218	Canterbury, Henry Charles Viscount
408	Carew, Robert Shapland George Julian Lord
319	Carleton, Richard Bernard Lord. (*Earl of Shannon*)
69	Carlisle, George James Earl of
115	Carnarvon, George Edward Stanhope Molyneux Earl of
85	Carnwath, Robert Harris Carnwath Earl of. (*Elected for Scotland*)
191	Carrington, Charles Robert Earl
348	Carysfort, William Lord. (*Earl of Carysfort*)
358	Castlemaine, Albert Edward Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)
460	Castletown, Bernard Edward Barnaby Lord
143	Cathcart, Alan Earl
157	Cawdor, Frederick Archibald Vaughan Earl
389	Chaworth, Reginald Lord. (*Earl of Meath*)
432	Chelmsford, Frederic John Napier Lord
431	Chesham, John Compton Lord
249	Chester, Francis John Bishop of
66	Chesterfield, Edwyn Francis Earl of
529	Cheylesmore, Herbert Francis Lord
131	Chichester, Jocelyn Brudenell Earl of
43	Cholmondeley, George Henry Hugh Marquess of
236	Churchill, Victor Albert Francis Charles Viscount
433	Churston, John Lord
216	Clancarty, William Frederick Viscount. (*Earl of Clancarty*)
382	Clanwilliam, Arthur Vesey Lord. (*Earl of Clanwilliam*)
110	Clarendon, Edward Hyde Earl of
387	Clements, Charles Lord. (*Earl of Leitrim*)
289	Clifford of Chudleigh, Lewis Henry Hugh Lord
270	Clinton, Charles John Robert Lord
341	Clonbrock, Luke Gerald Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)
394	Cloncurry, Valentine Frederick Lord
203	Cobham, Charles George Viscount
363	Colchester, Reginald Charles Edward Lord
609	Colebrooke, Edward Arthur Lord
470	Coleridge, Bernard John Seymour Lord
616	Collins, Richard Henn Lord. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary*)
235	Colville of Culross, Charles Robert William Viscount
217	Combermere, Francis Lynch Wellington Viscount
421	Congleton, Henry Bligh Fortescue Lord
2	Connaught and Strathearn, His Royal Highness Arthur William Patrick Albert Duke of
172	Cottenham, Kenelm Charles Edward Earl of
472	Cottesloe, Thomas Francis Lord
610	Courtney of Penwith, Leonard Henry Lord
76	Coventry, George William Earl of
173	Cowley, Henry Arthur Mornington Earl
189	Cranbrook, John Stewart Earl of
571	Cranworth, Bertram Francis Lord
128	Craven, William George Robert Earl of
536	Crawshaw, Thomas Lord
7 & 192	Crewe, Robert Offley Ashburton Earl of. (*Lord President of the Council*)
343	Crofton, Edward Henry Churchill Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)
196	Cromer, Evelyn Earl of
227	Cross, Richard Assheton Viscount
25	Cumberland and Teviotdale, His Royal Highness Ernest Augustus William Adolphus George Fredk. Duke of
569	Curzon of Kedleston, George Nathaniel Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)

D

120	Darnley, Ivo Francis Walter Earl of. (*Elected for Ireland*)
89	Dartmouth, William Heneage Earl of
178	Dartrey, Vesey Earl of
561	Dawnay, Hugh Richard Lord. (*Viscount Downe*)
269	de Clifford, Jack Southwell Lord
424	De Freyne, Arthur Lord
105	De La Warr, Gilbert Geo. Reginald Earl
398	De L'Isle and Dudley, Philip Lord
409	De Mauley, William Ashley Webb Lord
528	De Ramsey, William Henry Lord
395	de Saumarez, James St. Vincent Lord
371	Delamere, Hugh Lord
61	Denbigh, Rudolph Robert Basil Aloysius Augustine Earl of
396	Denman, Thomas Lord
510	Deramore, Robert Wilfrid Lord
56	Derby, Frederick Arthur Earl of
494	Derwent, Harcourt Lord
600	Desborough, William Henry Lord
59	Devon, Charles Pepys Earl of
17	Devonshire, Spencer Compton Duke of
306	Digby, Edward Henry Trafalgar Lord
309	Dinevor, Arthur de Cardonnel Lord
70	Doncaster, William Henry Walter Earl of. (*Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry*)
284	Dormer, Ronald John Lord
474	Douglas, Charles Alexander Lord. (*Earl of Home*)
119	Drogheda, Ponsonby William Earl of. (*Elected for Ireland*)
164	Ducie, Henry John Earl of
175	Dudley, William Humble Earl of
51	Dufferin and Ava, Terence John Temple Marquess of
346	Dunalley, Henry O'Callaghan Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)
337	Dunboyne, Robert St. John Fitz-Walter Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)
87	Dundonald, Douglas Mackinnon Baillie Hamilton Earl of. (*Elected for Scotland*)
590	Dunedin, Andrew Graham Lord
539	Dunleath, Henry Lyle Lord
390	Dunmore, Alexander Edward Lord. (*Earl of Dunmore*)
456	Dunning, John Lord. (*Lord Rollo*)
161	Durham, John George Earl of
244	Durham, Handley Carr Glyn Bishop of

E

430	Ebury, Robert Wellesley Lord
163	Effingham, Henry Alexander Gordon Earl of
193	Egerton, Wilbraham Earl
150	Eldon, John Earl of
423	Elgin, Victor Alexander Lord. (*Earl of Elgin and Kincardine*)
350	Ellenborough, Edward Downes Lord
170	Ellesmere, Francis Charles Granville Earl of
512	Elphinstone, Sidney Herbert Lord
471	Emly, Thomas William Gaston Lord
353	Erskine, William Macnaghten Lord
231	Esher, Reginald Baliol Viscount
68	Essex, George Devereux de Vere Earl of
588	Estcourt, George Thomas John Lord
466	Ettrick, William John George Lord (*Lord Napier*)
611	Eversley, George John Lord
39	Exeter, William Thomas Brownlow Marquess of
265	Exeter, Archibald Bishop of
214	Exmouth, Edward Addington Hargreaves Viscount

F

599	Faber, Edmund Beckett Lord
560	Fairlie, David Lord. (*Earl of Glasgow*)
201	Falkland, Byron Plantagenet Viscount. (*Elected for Scotland*)
204	Falmouth, Evelyn Edward Thomas Viscount
567	Farquhar, Horace Brand Lord
543	Farrer, Thomas Cecil Lord
476	Fermanagh, John Henry Lord. (*Earl Erne*)

88 Ferrers, Sewallis Edward Earl
179 Feversham, William Ernest Earl of
29 Fife, Alexander William George Duke of
385 Fingall, Arthur James Francis Lord. (*Earl of Fingall*)
323 Fisherwick, Edward Arthur Donald St. George Hamilton Lord. (*Marquess of Donegall*)
439 Fitzhardinge, Charles Paget Fitzhardinge Lord
602 Fitzmaurice, Edmond George Petty Lord
101 Fitzwilliam, William Charles De Meuron Earl
308 Foley, Fitzalan Charles John Lord
372 Forester, Cecil Theodore Lord
114 Fortescue, Hugh Earl
361 Foxford, William Henry Edmond de Vere Sheaffe Lord. (*Earl of Limerick*)

G

324 Gage, Henry Charles Lord. (*Viscount Gage*)
169 Gainsborough, Charles William Francis Earl of
356 Gardner, ——— Lord
480 Gerard, Frederic John Lord
374 Gifford, Edric Frederic Lord
613 Glantawe, John Jones Lord
570 Glanusk, Joseph Henry Russell Lord
554 Glenesk, Algernon Lord
213 Gordon, John Campbell Viscount. (*Earl of Aberdeen*)
453 Gormanston, Jenico Edward Joseph Lord. (*Viscount Gormanston*)
232 Goschen, George Joachim Viscount
221 Gough, Hugh Viscount
12 Grafton, Augustus Charles Lennox Duke of
94 Graham, Douglas Beresford Malise Ronald Earl. (*Duke of Montrose*)
355 Granard, Bernard Arthur William Patrick Hastings Lord. (*Earl of Granard*)
313 Grantley, John Richard Brinsley Lord
162 Granville, Granville George Earl
583 Grenfell, Francis Wallace Lord
463 Greville, Algernon William Fulke Lord
138 Grey, Albert Henry George Earl
272 Grey de Ruthyn, Rawdon George Grey Lord
516 Grimthorpe, Ernest William Lord
360 Grinstead, Lowry Egerton Lord (*Earl of Enniskillen*)
102 Guilford, Frederick George Earl of
333 Gwydir, Peter Robert Lord

H

83 Haddington, George Earl of. (*Elected for Scotland*)
484 Haldon, Lawrence William Lord
222 Halifax, Charles Lindley Viscount
194 Halsbury, Hardinge Stanley Earl of
520 Hamilton of Dalzell, Gavin George Lord
225 Hampden, Thomas Walter Viscount
473 Hampton, Herbert Stuart Lord
220 Hardinge, Henry Charles Viscount
103 Hardwicke, John Manners Earl of
458 Hare, William Lord. (*Earl of Listowel*)
141 Harewood, Henry Ulick Earl of
477 Harlech, George Ralph Charles Lord
97 Harrington, Charles Augustus Earl of
362 Harris, George Robert Canning Lord
140 Harrowby, John Herbert Dudley Earl of
445 Hartismere, Charles Henry Chandos Lord. (*Lord Henniker*)
268 Hastings, Albert Edward Delaval Lord
400 Hatherton, Edward George Percy Lord
604 Haversham, Arthur Divett Lord
307 Hawke, Martin Bladen Lord
298 Hay, Archibald Fitzroy George Lord. (*Earl of Kinnoul*)
342 Headley, Charles Mark Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)
605 Hemphill, Charles Hare Lord
556 Heneage, Edward Lord
200 Hereford, Robert Viscount
254 Hereford, John Bishop of
502 Herries, Marmaduke Francis Lord.
513 Herschell, Richard Farrer Lord.

37	Hertford, Hugh de Grey Marquess of
380	Heytesbury, Leonard Lord
219	Hill, Rowland Richard Viscount
514	Hillingdon, Charles William Lord
109	Hillsborough, Arthur Wills John Wellington Trumbull Blundell Earl of. (*Marquess of Downshire*)
517	Hindlip, Charles Lord
563	Holm Patrick, Hans Wellesley Lord
207	Hood, Francis Wheler Viscount
495	Hothfield, Henry James Lord
459	Howard of Glossop, Francis Edward Lord
280	Howard de Walden, Thomas Evelyn Lord
151	Howe, Richard George Penn Earl
492	Howth, William Ulick Tristram Lord. (*Earl of Howth*)
57	Huntingdon, Warner Francis John Plantagenet Earl of
215	Hutchinson, Richard Walter John Viscount. (*Earl of Donoughmore*)
446	Hylton, Hylton George Hylton Lord

I

187	Iddesleigh, Walter Stafford Earl of
104	Ilchester, Giles Stephen Holland Earl of
338	Inchiquin, Lucius William Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)
166	Innes, Henry John Earl. (*Duke of Roxburghe*)
564	Inverclyde, James Cleland Lord
239	Iveagh, Edward Cecil Viscount

J

552	James, Henry Lord
77	Jersey, Victor Albert George Earl of
606	Joicey, James Lord

K

388	Kenlis, Geoffrey Thomas Lord. (*Marquess of Headfort*)
427	Kenmare, Valentine Charles Lord. (*Earl of Kenmare*)
443	Kenry, Windham Thomas Lord. (*Earl of Dunraven and Mount-Earl*)
518	Kensington, Hugh Lord
321	Kenyon, Lloyd Lord
364	Ker, Robert Schomberg Lord (*Marquess of Lothian*)
449	Kesteven, John Henry Lord
576	Killanin, Martin Henry Lord
384	Kilmarnock, Charles Gore Lord. (*Earl of Erroll*)
154	Kilmorey, Francis Charles Earl of. (*Elected for Ireland*)
177	Kimberley, John Earl of
437	Kinnaird, Arthur Fitz-Gerald Lord
558	Kinnear, Alexander Smith Lord
579	Kinross, Patrick Lord
406	Kintore, Algernon Hawkins Thomond Lord. (*Earl of Kintore*)
234	Kitchener of Khartoum and of the Vaal, Horatio Herbert Viscount
596	Knaresborough, Henry Meysey Lord
584	Knollys, Francis Lord
229	Knutsford, Henry Thurstan Viscount

L

487	Lamington, Charles Wallace Alexander Napier Lord
344	Langford, Hercules Edward Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)
32	Lansdowne, Henry Charles Keith Marquess of
184	Lathom, Edward George Earl of
84	Lauderdale, Frederick Henry Earl of. (*Elected for Scotland*)
455	Lawrence, John Hamilton Lord
434	Leconfield, Charles Henry Lord
15	Leeds, George Godolphin Duke of
167	Leicester, Thomas William Earl of
414	Leigh, Francis Dudley Lord
206	Leinster, Maurice Viscount. (*Duke of Leinster*)
591	Leith of Fyvie, Alexander John Lord
160	Lichfield, Thomas Francis Earl of
251	Lichfield, Augustus Bishop of
335	Lilford, John Lord
247	Lincoln, Edward Bishop of
575	Lindley, Nathaniel Lord
63	Lindsey, Montague Peregrine Albemarle Earl of
53	Linlithgow, John Adrian Louis Marquess of

559	Lister, Joseph Lord
198	Liverpool, Arthur William de Brito Earl of
262	Liverpool, Francis James Bishop of
230	Llandaff, Henry Viscount
540	Llangattock, John Allan Lord
548	Loch, Edward Douglas Lord
347	Loftus, John Henry Lord. (*Marquess of Ely*)
188	Londesborough, William Francis Henry Earl of
243	London, Arthur Foley Bishop of
139	Lonsdale, Hugh Cecil Earl of
5 & 601	Loreburn, Robert Threshie Lord. (*Lord High Chancellor*)
404	Lovat, Simon Joseph Lord
168	Lovelace, Lionel Fortescue Earl of
304	Lovel and Holland, Augustus Arthur Lord. (*Earl of Egmont*)
124	Lucan, George Earl of. (*Elected for Ireland*)
288	Lucas, Auberon Thomas Lord
562	Ludlow, Henry Ludlow Lord
416	Lurgan, William Lord
183	Lytton, Victor Alexander George Robert Earl of
435	Lyveden, Courtenay Robert Percy Lord

M

93	Macclesfield, George Loveden William Henry Earl of
522	Macnaghten, Edward Lord. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary*)
526	Magheramorne, Dudley Stuart Lord
117	Malmesbury, James Edward Earl of
22	Manchester, William Angus Drogo Duke of
266	Manchester, Edmund Arbuthnott Bishop of
357	Manners, John Thomas Lord
111	Mansfield, Alan David Earl of
136	Manvers, Charles William Sydney Earl
79	Mar, John Francis Erskine Earl of. (*Elected for Scotland*)
82	Mar and Kellie, Walter John Francis Earl of. (*Elected for Scotland*)
18	Marlborough, Charles Richard John Duke of
533	Masham, Samuel Lord
339	Massy, John Thomas William Lord (*Elected for Ireland*)
121	Mayo, Dermot Robert Wyndham Earl of. (*Elected for Ireland*)
359	Meldrum, Charles Lord. (*Marquess of Huntly*)
210	Melville, Charles Saunders Viscount
327	Mendip, Thomas Charles Lord. (*Viscount Clifden*)
442	Meredyth, James Herbert Gustavus Meredyth Lord. (*Lord Athlumney*)
412	Methuen, Paul Sanford Lord
598	Michelham, Herbert Lord
299	Middleton, Digby Wentworth Bayard Lord
237	Milner, Alfred Viscount
365	Minster, Victor George Henry Francis Lord. (*Marquess Conyngham*)
142	Minto, Gilbert John Earl of
444	Monck, Henry Power Charles Stanley Lord. (*Viscount Monck*)
524	Monckton, George Edmund Milnes Lord. (*Viscount Galway*)
469	Moncreiff, Henry James Lord
499	Monk Bretton, John William Lord
507	Monkswell, Robert Lord
300	Monson, Augustus Debonnaire John Lord
511	Montagu of Beaulieu, John Walter Edward Lord
354	Monteagle, Henry Ulick Lord. (*Marquess of Sligo*)
417	Monteagle of Brandon, Thomas Spring Lord
147	Morley, Edmund Robert Earl of
81	Morton, Sholto George Watson Earl of. (*Elected for Scotland*)
392	Mostyn, Llewelyn Nevill Vaughan Lord
113	Mount Edgcumbe, William Henry Earl of
532	Mount Stephen, George Lord
267	Mowbray, Charles Botolph Joseph Lord
568	Muncaster, Josslyn Francis Lord
158	Munster, Aubrey Earl of
340	Muskerry, Hamilton Matthew Fitzmaurice Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)

N

452 Napier, Robert William Lord
134 Nelson, Horatio Earl
23 Newcastle, Henry Pelham Archibald Douglas Duke of
566 Newlands, James Henry Cecil Lord
538 Newton, Thomas Wodehouse Lord
9 Norfolk, Henry Duke of. (*Earl Marshal of England*)
47 Normanby, Constantine Charles Henry Marquess of
278 North, William Henry John Lord
40 Northampton, William George Spencer Scott Marquess of
500 Northbourne, Walter Henry Lord
181 Northbrook, Francis George Earl of
597 Northcliffe, Alfred Charles William Lord
573 Northcote, Henry Stafford Lord
86 Northesk, David John Earl of. (*Elected for Scotland*)
504 Northington, Frederic Lord. (*Lord Henley*)
24 Northumberland, Henry George Duke of
482 Norton, Charles Leigh Lord
252 Norwich, John Bishop of
607 Nunburnholme, Charles Henry Lord

O

577 O'Brien, Peter Lord
464 O'Hagan, Maurice Herbert Ignatius Towneley Lord
451 O'Neill, Edward Lord
129 Onslow, William Hillier Earl of
403 Oranmore and Browne, Geoffrey Henry Browne Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)
137 Orford, Robert Horace Earl of
369 Oriel, Algernon William John Clotworthy Lord. (*Viscount Massereene*)
450 Ormathwaite, Arthur Lord
366 Ormonde, James Edward William Theobald Lord. (*Marquess of Ormonde*)
544 Overtoun, John Campbell Lord
419 Oxenfoord, John Hew North Gustave Henry Lord. (*Earl of Stair*)
263 Oxford, Francis Bishop of

P

620 Peckover, Alexander Lord
228 Peel, Arthur Wellesley Viscount
58 Pembroke and Montgomery, Sidney Earl of
447 Penrhyn, Edward Sholto Lord
257 Peterborough, Edward Carr Bishop of
281 Petre, Bernard Henry Philip Lord
612 Pirrie, William James Lord
541 Playfair, George James Lord
379 Plunket, William Lee Lord
197 Plymouth, Robert George Earl of
391 Poltimore, Augustus Frederick George Warwick Lord
301 Ponsonby, Edward Lord. (*Earl of Bessborough*)
21 Portland, William John Arthur Charles James Duke of
224 Portman, William Henry Berkeley Viscount
98 Portsmouth, Newton Earl of
78 Poulett, William John Lydston Earl
503 Powerscourt, Mervyn Richard Lord
133 Powis, George Charles Earl of

R

106 Radnor, Jacob Earl of
426 Raglan, George Fitz-Roy Henry Lord
475 Ramsay, Arthur George Maule Lord. (*Earl of Dalhousie*)
377 Ranfurly, Uchter John Mark Lord. (*Earl of Ranfurly*)
454 Rathdonnell, Thomas Kane Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)
553 Rathmore, David Robert Lord
370 Ravensworth, Arthur Thomas Lord
373 Rayleigh, John William Lord
493 Reay, Donald James Lord
585 Redesdale, Algernon Bertram Lord
546 Rendel, Stuart Lord
506 Revelstoke, John Lord
336 Ribblesdale, Thomas Lord
11 Richmond and Gordon, Charles Henry Duke of

233 Ridley, Matthew White Viscount

8 & 48 Ripon, George Frederick Samuel Marquess of. (*Lord Privy Seal*)

246 Ripon, William Boyd Bishop of

593 Ritchie, of Dundee, Charles Lord

195 Roberts, Frederick Sleigh Earl

572 Robertson, James Patrick Bannerman Lord. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary*)

314 Rodney, George Bridges Harley Dennett Lord

441 Romilly, William Gaspard Guy Lord

130 Romney, Charles Earl of

381 Rosebery, Archibald Philip Lord. (*Earl of Rosebery*)

557 Rosmead, Hercules Arthur Temple Lord

135 Rosse, Lawrence Earl of. (*Elected for Ireland*)

127 Rosslyn, James Francis Harry Earl of

407 Rossmore, Derrick Warner William Lord

80 Rothes, Norman Evelyn. (*Elected for Scotland*).

505 Rothschild, Nathaniel Mayer Lord

176 Russell, John Francis Stanley Earl

19 Rutland, Henry John Brinsley Robert Duke of

S

481 Sackville, Lionel Sackville Lord

14 St. Albans, Charles Victor Albert Aubrey De Vere Duke of

256 St. Albans, Edgar Bishop of

242 St. Aldwyn, Michael Edward Viscount

250 St. Asaph, Alfred George Bishop of

258 St. David's, John Bishop of

146 Saint Germans, Henry Cornwallis Earl of

279 St. John of Bletso, Beauchamp Moubray Lord

425 Saint Leonards, Edward Burtenshaw Lord

525 Saint Levan, John Lord

509 Saint Oswald, Rowland Lord

209 St. Vincent, Carnegie Parker Viscount

34 Salisbury, James Edward Hubert Marquess of

248 Salisbury, John Bishop of

330 Saltersford, James George Henry Lord. (*Earl of Courtown*)

291 Saltoun, Alexander William Fredk. Lord. (*Elected for Scotland*)

594 Sanderson, Thomas Henry Lord

465 Sandhurst, William Lord

67 Sandwich, Edward George Henry Earl of

351 Sandys, Michael Edwin Marcus Lord

531 Savile, John Savile Lord

282 Saye and Sele, Geoffrey Cecil Lord

74 Scarbrough, Aldred Fredk. George Beresford Earl of

302 Scarsdale, Alfred Nathaniel Holden Lord

418 Seaton, John Reginald Upton Lord

386 Sefton, Osbert Cecil Lord. (*Earl of Sefton*)

186 Selborne, William Waldegrave Earl of

238 Selby, William Court Viscount

71 Shaftesbury, Anthony Earl of

352 Sheffield, Henry North Lord. (*Earl of Sheffield*)

317 Sherborne, Edward Lennox Lord

55 Shrewsbury, Charles Henry John Earl of

483 Shute, Walter Bulkeley Lord (*Viscount Barrington*)

580 Shuttleworth, Ughtred James Lord

211 Sidmouth, William Wells Viscount

368 Silchester, Thomas Lord. (*Earl of Longford*)

292 Sinclair, Charles William Lord. (*Elected for Scotland*)

375 Somerhill, Hubert George Lord. (*Marquess of Clanricarde*)

315 Somers, Arthur Herbert Tennyson Lord

10 Somerset, Algernon Duke of

467 Somerton, Sidney James Ellis Lord. (*Earl of Normanton*)

185 Sondes, Lewis Arthur Earl

312 Southampton, Charles Henry Lord

255 Southwark, Edward Stuart Bishop of

107 Spencer, John Poyntz Earl

286	Stafford, Fitzherbert Lord
517	Stalbridge, Richard de Aquila Lord
64	Stamford, William Earl of
92	Stanhope, James Richard Earl
413	Stanley of Alderley, Edward Lyulph Lord
545	Stanmore, Arthur Lord
329	Stewart of Garlies, Randolph Henry Lord. (*Earl of Galloway*)
152	Stradbroke, George Edward John Mowbray Earl of
171	Strafford, Francis Edmund Cecil Earl of
112	Strange, John James Hugh Henry Earl. (*Duke of Atholl*)
565	Strathcona and Mount Royal, Donald Alexander Lord
402	Stratheden, Hallyburton George Lord
498	Strathspey, James Lord. (*Earl of Seafield*)
328	Stuart of Castle Stuart, Francis James Lord. (*Earl of Moray*)
411	Sudeley, Charles Douglas Richard Lord
501	Sudley, Arthur Jocelyn Charles Lord. (*Earl of Arran*)
320	Suffield, Charles Lord
60	Suffolk and Berkshire, Henry Molyneux Paget Earl of
27	Sutherland, Cromartie Duke of
542	Swansea, Ernest Ambrose Lord
618	Swaythling, Montagu Lord

T

429	Talbot de Malahide, Richard Wogan Lord
90	Tankerville, George Montague Earl of
153	Temple of Stowe, Algernon William Stephen Earl
393	Templemore, Arthur Henry Lord
212	Templetown, Henry Edward Montagu Dorington Clotworthy Viscount. (*Elected for Ireland*)
497	Tennyson, Hallam Lord
378	Tenterden, Charles Stuart Henry Lord
285	Teynham, Henry John Philip Sidney Lord
325	Thurlow, Thomas John Lord
479	Tollemache, Bentley Lyonel John Lord
294	Torphichen, James Walter Lord. (*Elected for Scotland*)
205	Torrington, George Master Viscount
33	Townshend, John James Dudley Stuart Marquess
241	Tredegar, Godfrey Charles Viscount
488	Trevor, Arthur William Lord
491	Tweeddale, William Montagu Lord. (*Marquess of Tweeddale*)
496	Tweedmouth, Edward Lord
318	Tyrone, Henry De La Poer Lord. (*Marquess of Waterford*)

V

155	Vane, Charles Stewart Earl. (*Marquess of Londonderry*)
276	Vaux of Harrowden, Hubert George Charles Lord
345	Ventry, Dayrolles Blakeney Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)
305	Vernon, George Francis Augustus Lord
144	Verulam, James Walter Earl of
420	Vivian, George Crespigny Brabazon Lord

W

260	Wakefield, George Rodney Bishop of
95	Waldegrave, William Frederick Earl
595	Waleran, William Hood Lord
1	Wales, His Royal Highness The Prince of
310	Walsingham, Thomas Lord
549	Wandsworth, Sydney James Lord
603	Weardale, Philip James Lord
547	Welby, Reginald Earle Lord
26	Wellington, Arthur Charles Duke of
367	Wemyss, Francis Richard Lord. (*Earl of Wemyss*)
415	Wenlock, Beilby Lord
438	Westbury, Richard Luttrell Pilkington Lord
118	Westmeath, Anthony Francis Earl of. (*Elected for Ireland*)
28	Westminster, Hugh Richard Arthur Duke of

62	Westmorland, Anthony Mildmay Julian Earl of
180	Wharncliffe, Francis John Earl of
123	Wicklow, Ralph Francis Earl of. *(Elected for Ireland)*
376	Wigan, James Ludovic Lord. (*Earl of Crawford*)
275	Willoughby de Broke, Richard Greville Lord
132	Wilton, Arthur George Earl of
485	Wimborne, Ivor Bertie Lord
31	Winchester, Henry William Montagu Marquess of
245	Winchester, Herbert Edward Bishop of
65	Winchilsea and Nottingham, Henry Stormont Earl of
608	Winterstoke, William Henry Lord
174	Winton, George Arnulph Earl of. (*Earl of Eglintoun*)
226	Wolseley, Garnet Joseph Viscount
462	Wolverton, Frederick Lord
401	Worlingham, Archibald Brabazon Sparrow Lord. (*Earl of Gosford*)
410	Wrottesley, Arthur Lord
383	Wynford, Philip George Lord

Y

165	Yarborough, Chas. Alfred Worsley Earl of
6	York, William Dalrymple Archbishop of

Z

52	Zetland, Lawrence Marquess of
271	Zouche of Haryngworth, Robert Nathaniel Cecil George Lord

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The following Lords have Two Numbers, being Twice named in the Roll :

Lord Loreburn, as Lord High Chancellor, and as Lord Loreburn (Nos. 5 and 601)

Earl of Crewe, as Lord President, and as Earl of Crewe (Nos. 7 and 192)

Marquess of Ripon, as Lord Privy Seal, and as Marquess of Ripon (Nos. 8 and 48)

Earl Beauchamp, as Lord Steward, and as Earl Beauchamp (Nos. 54 and 149)

Viscount Althorp, as Lord Chamberlain, and as Viscount Althorp (Nos. 199 and 240)

ROLL

OF THE

LORDS SPIRITUAL AND TEMPORAL

IN THE

THIRD SESSION OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

OF

THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

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8 EDWARD VII. 1908.

MEM.—*According to the Usage of Parliament, when the House appoints a Select Committee, the Lords appointed to serve upon it are named in the Order of their Rank, beginning with the Highest; and so, when the House sends a Committee to a Conference with the Commons, the Lord highest in Rank is called first, and the rest go forth in like Order: But when the Whole House is called over for any Purpose, within the House, or for the Purpose of proceeding forth to Westminster Hall, or upon any public Solemnity, the Call begins invariably with the Junior Baron.*

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1 His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales

2 His Royal Highness Arthur William Patrick Albert Duke of Connaught and Strathearn

3 His Royal Highness Leopold Charles Edward George Albert Duke of Albany

4 Randall Thomas Archbishop of Canterbury

5 Robert Threshie Lord Loreburn, *Lord High Chancellor*

6 William Dalrymple Archbishop of York

7 Robert Offley Ashburton Earl of Crewe, *Lord President of the Council.*

8 George Frederick Samuel Marquess of Ripon *Lord Privy Seal.*

9 Henry Duke of Norfolk, *Earl Marshal of England*

10 Algernon Duke of Somerset

11 Charles Henry Duke of Richmond and Gordon

12 Augustus Charles Lennox Duke of Grafton

13 Henry Adelbert Wellington Fitzroy Duke of Beaufort

14 Charles Victor Albert Aubrey de Vere Duke of St. Albans

15 George Godolphin Duke of Leeds
16 Herbrand Arthur Duke of Bedford
17 Spencer Compton Duke of Devonshire.
18 Charles Richard John Duke of Marlborough
19 Henry John Brinsley Duke of Rutland
20 Alfred Douglas Duke of Brandon
21 William John Arthur Charles James Duke of Portland
22 William Angus Drogo Duke of Manchester
23 Henry Pelham Archibald Douglas Duke of Newcastle
24 Henry George Duke of Northumberland
25 His Royal Highness Ernest Augustus William Adolphus George Frederick Duke of Cumberland and Teviotdale
26 Arthur Charles Duke of Wellington
27 Cromartie Duke of Sutherland
28 Hugh Richard Arthur Duke of Westminster
29 Alexander William George Duke of Fife
30 John Douglas Sutherland Duke of Argyll
31 Henry William Montagu Marquess of Winchester
32 Henry Charles Keith Marquess of Lansdowne
33 John James Dudley Stuart Marquess Townshend
34 James Edward Hubert Marquess of Salisbury.
35 Thomas Henry Marquess of Bath
36 James Marquess of Abercorn. (*Duke of Abercorn*)
37 Hugh de Grey Marquess of Hertford
38 John Marquess of Bute
39 William Thomas Brownlow Marquess of Exeter
40 William George Spencer Scott Marquess of Northampton
41 John Charles Marquess Camden
42 Charles Henry Alexander Marquess of Anglesey
43 George Henry Hugh Marquess of Cholmondeley.
44 Henry Augustus Marquess of Ailesbury
45 Frederick William Fane Marquess of Bristol
46 Archibald Marquess of Ailsa
47 Constantine Charles Henry Marquess of Normanby
48 George Frederick Samuel Marquess of Ripon (*In another place as Lord Privy Seal.*)
49 William Marquess of Abergavenny
50 Gavin Marquess of Breadalbane
51 Terence John Temple Marquess of Dufferin and Ava
52 Lawrence Marquess of Zetland
53 John Adrian Louis Marquess of Linlithgow
54 William Earl Beachamp, *Lord Steward of the Household.*
55 Charles Henry John Earl of Shrewsbury
56 Frederick Arthur Earl of Derby
57 Warner Francis John Plantagenet Earl of Huntingdon
58 Sidney Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery.
59 Charles Pepys Earl of Devon
60 Henry Molyneux Paget Earl of Suffolk and Berkshire
61 Rudolph Robert Basil Aloysius Augustine Earl of Denbigh
62 Anthony Mildmay Julian Earl of Westmorland
63 Montague Peregrine Albemarle Earl of Lindsey
64 William Earl of Stamford
65 Henry Stormont Earl of Winchilsea and Nottingham
66 Edwyn Francis Earl of Chesterfield
67 Edward George Henry Earl of Sandwich
68 George Devereux de Vere Earl of Essex
69 George James Earl of Carlisle
70 William Henry Walter Earl of Doncaster. (*Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry*)

71 Anthony Earl of Shaftesbury

72 Randal Mowbray Thomas Earl of Berkeley

73 Montagu Arthur Earl of Abingdon

74 Aldred Frederick George Beresford Earl of Scarborough

75 Arnold Allan Cecil Earl of Albemarle

76 George William Earl of Coventry

77 Victor Albert George Earl of Jêrsey

78 William John Lydston Earl Poulett

79 John Francis Erskine Earl of Mar. (*Elected for Scotland*)

80 Norman Evelyn Earl of Rothes. (*Elected for Scotland*)

81 Sholto George Watson Earl of Morton. (*Elected for Scotland*)

82 Walter John Francis Earl of Mar and Kellie. (*Elected for Scotland*)

83 George Earl of Haddington. (*Elected for Scotland*)

84 Frederick Henry Earl of Lauderdale. (*Elected for Scotland*)

85 Robert Harris Carnwath Earl of Carnwath. (*Elected for Scotland*)

86 David John Earl of Northesk. (*Elected for Scotland*)

87 Douglas Mackinnon Baillie Hamilton Earl of Dundonald. (*Elected for Scotland*)

88 Sewallis Edward Earl Ferrers

89 William Heneage Earl of Dartmouth

90 George Montagu Earl of Tankerville

91 Charles Wightwick Earl of Aylesford

92 James Richard Earl Stanhope

93 George Loveden William Henry Earl of Macclesfield

94 Douglas Beresford Malise Ronald Earl Graham. (*Duke of Montrose*)

95 William Frederick Earl Waldegrave

96 Bertram Earl of Ashburnham

97 Charles Augustus Earl of Harrington

98 Newton Earl of Portsmouth

99 Francis Richard Charles Guy Earl Brooke and Earl of Warwick

100 Sidney Carr Earl of Buckinghamshire

101 William Charles De Meuron Earl Fitzwilliam

102 Frederick George Earl of Guilford

103 John Manners Earl of Hardwicke

104 Giles Stephen Holland Earl of Ilchester

105 Gilbert George Reginald Earl De La Warr

106 Jacob Earl of Radnor

107 John Poyntz Earl Spencer

108 Seymour Henry Earl Bathurst

109 Arthur Wills John Wellington Trumbull Blundell Earl of Hillsborough. (*Marquess of Downshire*)

110 Edward Hyde Earl of Clarendon

111 Alan David Earl of Mansfield

112 John James Hugh Henry Earl Strange. (*Duke of Atholl*)

113 William Henry Earl of Mount Edgcumbe

114 Hugh Earl Fortescue

115 George Edward Stanhope Molyneux Earl of Carnarvon

116 George Henry Earl Cadogan

117 James Edward Earl of Malmesbury

118 Anthony Francis Earl of Westmeath. (*Elected for Ireland*)

119 Ponsonby William Earl of Drogheda (*Elected for Ireland*)

120 Ivo Francis Walter Earl of Darnley. (*Elected for Ireland*)

121 Dermot Robert Wyndham Earl of Mayo. (*Elected for Ireland*)

122 Hugh Earl Annesley. (*Elected for Ireland*)

123 Ralph Francis Earl of Wicklow. (*Elected for Ireland*)

124 George Earl of Lucan. (*Elected for Ireland*)

125 Somerset Richard Earl of Belmore. (*Elected for Ireland*)

126 James Francis Earl of Bandon. (*Elected for Ireland*)

127 James Francis Harry Earl of Rosslyn

128 William George Robert Earl of Craven

129 William Hillier Earl of Onslow

130 Charles Earl of Romney
131 Jocelyn Brudenell Earl of Chichester
132 Arthur George Earl of Wilton
133 George Charles Earl of Powis
134 Horatio Earl Nelson
135 Lawrence Earl of Rosse. (*Elected for Ireland*)
136 Charles William Sydney Earl Manvers
137 Robert Horace Earl of Orford
138 Albert Henry George Earl Grey
139 Hugh Cecil Earl of Lonsdale
140 John Herbert Dudley Earl of Harrowby
141 Henry Ulick Earl of Harewood
142 Gilbert John Earl of Minto
143 Alan Earl Cathcart
144 James Walter Earl of Verulam
145 Adelbert Wellington Brownlow Earl Brownlow
146 Henry Cornwallis Earl of Saint Germans
147 Edmund Robert Earl of Morley
148 George Cecil Orlando Earl of Bradford
149 William Earl Beauchamp. (*In another place as the Lord Steward of the Household.*)
150 John Earl of Eldon
151 Richard George Penn Earl Howe
152 George Edward John Mowbray Earl of Stradbroke
153 Algernon William Stephen Earl Temple of Stowe
154 Francis Charles Earl of Kilmorey (*Elected for Ireland*)
155 Charles Stewart Earl Vane. (*Marquess of Londonderry*)
156 William Archer Earl Amherst
157 Frederick Archibald Vaughan Earl Cawdor
158 Aubrey Earl of Munster
159 Robert Adam Philips Haldane Earl of Camperdown
160 Thomas Francis Earl of Lichfield
161 John George Earl of Durham
162 Granville George Earl Granville
163 Henry Alexander Gordon Earl of Effingham
164 Henry John Earl of Ducie
165 Charles Alfred Worsley Earl of Yarborough
166 Henry John Earl Innes. (*Duke of Roxburghe*)
167 Thomas William Earl of Leicester
168 Lionel Fortescue Earl of Lovelace
169 Charles William Francis Earl of Gainsborough
170 Francis Charles Granville Earl of Ellesmere
171 Francis Edmund Cecil Earl of Strafford
172 Kenelm Charles Edward Earl of Cottenham
173 Henry Arthur Mornington Earl Cowley
174 George Arnulph Earl of Winton. (*Earl of Eglintoun*)
175 William Humble Earl of Dudley
176 John Francis Stanley Earl Russell
177 John Earl of Kimberley
178 Vesey Earl of Dartrey
179 William Ernest Earl of Feversham
180 Francis John Earl of Wharncliffe
181 Francis George Earl of Northbrook
182 Wilfrid Dallas Earl Cairns
183 Victor Alexander George Robert Earl of Lytton
184 Edward George Earl of Lathom
185 Lewis Arthur Earl Sondes
186 William Waldegrave Earl of Selborne
187 Walter Stafford Earl of Iddesleigh
188 William Francis Henry Earl of Londesborough
189 John Stewart Earl of Cranbrook
190 Gilbert Henry Earl of Ancaster
191 Charles Robert Earl Carrington
192 Robert Offley Ashburton Earl of Crewe. (*In another place as Lord President of the Council*)
193 Wilbraham Earl Egerton
194 Hardinge Stanley Earl of Halsbury
195 Frederick Sleigh Earl Roberts
196 Evelyn Earl of Cromer
197 Robert George Earl of Plymouth
198 Arthur William de Brito Savile of Liverpool.
199 Charles Robert Viscount Althorp, (*Lord Chamberlain of the Household.*)
200 Robert Viscount Hereford

201 Byron Plantagenet Viscount Falkland. (*Elected for Scotland*)

202 ——— Viscount Bolingbroke and St. John

203 Charles George Viscount Cobham

204 Evelyn Edward Thomas Viscount Falmouth

205 George Master Viscount Torrington

206 Maurice Viscount Leinster. (*Duke of Leinster*)

207 Francis Wheler Viscount Hood

208 Henry William Crosbie Viscount Bangor. (*Elected for Ireland*)

209 Carnegie Parker Viscount St. Vincent

210 Charles Saunders Viscount Melville

211 William Wells Viscount Sidmouth

212 Henry Edward Montagu Dorington Clotworthy Viscount Templetown. (*Elected for Ireland*)

213 John Campbell Viscount Gordon (*Earl of Aberdeen*)

214 Edward Addington Hargreaves Viscount Exmouth

215 Richard Walter John Viscount Hutchinson. (*Earl of Donoughmore*)

216 William Frederick Viscount Clancarty. (*Earl of Clancarty*)

217 Francis Lynch Wellington Viscount Combermere

218 Henry Charles Viscount Canterbury

219 Rowland Richard Viscount Hill

220 Henry Charles Viscount Hardinge

221 Hugh Viscount Gough

222 Charles Lindley Viscount Halifax

223 Arthur Wellington Alexander Nelson Viscount Bridport

224 William Henry Berkeley Viscount Portman

225 Thomas Walter Viscount Hampden

226 Garnet Joseph Viscount Wolseley

227 Richard Assheton Viscount Cross

228 Arthur Wellesley Viscount Peel

229 Henry Thurstan Viscount Knutsford

230 Henry Viscount Llandaff

231 Reginald Baliol Viscount Esher

232 George Joachim Viscount Goschen

233 Matthew White Viscount Ridley

234 Horatio Herbert Viscount Kitchener of Khartoum and of the Vaal.

235 Charles Robert William Viscount Colville of Culross.

236 Victor Albert Francis Charles Viscount Churchill

237 Alfred Viscount Milner

238 William Court Viscount Selby

239 Edward Cecil Viscount Iveagh

240 Charles Robert Viscount Althorp. (*In another place as Lord Chamberlain of the Household*)

241 Godfrey Charles Viscount Tredegar

242 Michael Edward Viscount St. Aldwyn.

243 Arthur Foley Bishop of London

244 Handley Carr Glyn Bishop of Durham

245 Herbert Edward Bishop of Winchester

246 William Boyd Bishop of Ripon

247 Edward Bishop of Lincoln

248 John Bishop of Salisbury

249 Francis John Bishop of Chester

250 Alfred George Bishop of St. Asaph

251 Augustus Bishop of Lichfield

252 John Bishop of Norwich

253 George Wyndham Bishop of Bath and Wells

254 John Bishop of Hereford

255 Edward Stuart Bishop of Southwark

256 Edgar Bishop of St. Albans

257 Edward Carr Bishop of Peterborough

258 John Bishop of St. David's

259 George Forrest Bishop of Bristol.

260 George Rodney Bishop of Wakefield

261 Watkin Herbert Bishop of Bangor

262 Francis James Bishop of Liverpool

263 Francis Bishop of Oxford.

264 Charles Bishop of Birmingham

265 Archibald Bishop of Exeter

266 Edmund Arbuthnott Bishop of Manchester

267 Charles Botolph Joseph Lord Mowbray

268 Albert Edward Delaval Lord Hastings

269 Jack Southwell Lord de Clifford
270 Charles John Robert Lord Clinton
271 Robert Nathaniel Cecil George Lord Zouche of Haryngworth
272 Rawdon George Grey Lord Grey de Ruthyn
273 Charles Edward Hastings Lord Botreaux. (*Earl of Loudoun*)
274 Ralph Francis Julian Lord Camoys
275 Richard Greville Lord Willoughby de Broke
276 Hubert George Charles Lord Vaux of Harrowden
277 Alfred Thomas Townshend Lord Braye
278 William Henry John Lord North
279 Beauchamp Moubray Lord St. John of Bletso
280 Thomas Evelyn Lord Howard de Walden
281 Bernard Henry Philip Lord Petre
282 Geoffrey Cecil Lord Saye and Sele
283 Edgar Clifford Lord Arundell of Wardour
284 Ronald John Lord Dormer
285 Henry John Philip Sidney Lord Teynham
286 Fitzherbert Lord Stafford
287 George Frederick William Lord Byron
288 Auberon Thomas Lord Lucas
289 Lewis Henry Hugh Lord Clifford of Chudleigh
290 Henry de Vere Lord Barnard
291 Alexander William Frederick Lord Saltoun. (*Elected for Scotland*)
292 Charles William Lord Sinclair. (*Elected for Scotland*)
293 Archibald Patrick Thomas Lord Borthwick (*Elected for Scotland*)
294 James Walter Lord Torphichen. (*Elected for Scotland*)
295 Alexander Hugh Lord Balfour of Burley. (*Elected for Scotland*)
296 Alexander Charles Lord Belhaven and Stenton. (*Elected for Scotland*)
297 Charles Spencer Canning Lord Boyle. (*Earl of Cork and Orrery*).
298 Archibald Fitzroy George Lord Hay. (*Earl of Kinnoul*)
299 Digby Wentworth Bayard Lord Middleton
300 Augustus Debonnaire John Lord Monson
301 Edward Lord Ponsonby. (*Earl of Bessborough*)
302 Alfred Nathaniel Holden Lord Scarsdale
303 George Florance Lord Boston
304 Augustus Arthur Lord Lovel and Holland. (*Earl of Egmont*)
305 George Francis Augustus Lord Vernon
306 Edward Henry Trafalgar Lord Digby
307 Martin Bladen Lord Hawke
308 Fitzalan Charles John Lord Foley
309 Arthur de Cardonnel Lord Dinevor
310 Thomas Lord Walsingham
311 William Lord Bagot
312 Charles Henry Lord Southampton
313 John Richard Brinsley Lord Grantley
314 George Bridges Harley Dennett Lord Rodney
315 Arthur Herbert Tennyson Lord Somers
316 Richard Henry Lord Berwick
317 Edward Lennox Lord Sherborne
318 Henry De La Poer Lord Tyrone (*Marquess of Waterford*)
319 Richard Bernard Lord Carleton. (*Earl of Shannon*)
320 Charles Lord Suffield
321 Lloyd Lord Kenyon
322 Henry Lord Braybrooke
323 Edward Arthur Donald St. George Hamilton Lord Fisherwick. (*Marquess of Donegall*)
324 Henry Charles Lord Gage. (*Viscount Gage*)
325 Thomas John Lord Thurlow
326 William Morton Lord Auckland
327 Thomas Charles Lord Mendip, (*Viscount Clifden*)
328 Francis James Lord Stuart of Castle Stuart. (*Earl of Moray*)
329 Randolph Henry Lord Stewart of Garlies. (*Earl of Galloway*)

330 James George Henry Lord Saltersford. (*Earl of Courtown*)

331 William St. John Fremantle Lord Brodrick. (*Viscount Midleton*)

332 Augustus Cholmondeley Lord Calthorpe

333 Peter Robert Lord Gwydir

334 William Thomas Lord Bolton

335 John Lord Lilford

336 Thomas Lord Ribblesdale

337 Robert St. John FitzWalter Lord Dunboyne. (*Elected for Ireland*)

338 Lucius William Lord Inchiquin. (*Elected for Ireland*)

339 John Thomas William Lord Massy. (*Elected for Ireland*)

340 Hamilton Matthew Fitzmaurice Lord Muskerry. (*Elected for Ireland*)

341 Luke Gerald Lord Clonbrock (*Elected for Ireland*)

342 Charles Mark Lord Headley. (*Elected for Ireland*)

343 Edward Henry Churchill Lord Crofton. (*Elected for Ireland*)

344 Hercules Edward Lord Langford (*Elected for Ireland*)

345 Dayrolles Blakeney Lord Ventry (*Elected for Ireland*)

346 Henry O'Callaghan Lord Dunalley (*Elected for Ireland*)

347 John Henry Lord Loftus. (*Marquess of Ely*)

348 William Lord Carysfort. (*Earl of Carysfort*)

349 George Ralph Lord Abercromby

350 Edward Downes Lord Ellenborough

351 Michael Edwin Marcus Lord Sandys

352 Henry North Lord Sheffield. (*Earl of Sheffield*)

353 William Macnaghten Lord Erskine

354 Henry Ulick Lord Monteagle (*Marquess of Sligo*)

355 Bernard Arthur William Patrick Hastings Lord Granard. (*Earl of Granard*)

356 ———————— Lord Gardner

357 John Thomas Lord Manners

358 Albert Edward Lord Castlemaine. (*Elected for Ireland*)

359 Charles Lord Meldrum. (*Marquess of Huntly*)

360 Lowry Egerton Lord Grinstead. (*Earl of Enniskillen*)

361 William Henry Edmond de Vere Sheaffe Lord Foxford. (*Earl of Limerick*)

362 George Robert Canning Lord Harris

363 Reginald Charles Edward Lord Colchester

364 Robert Schomberg Lord Ker. (*Marquess of Lothian*)

365 Victor George Henry Francis Lord Minster. (*Marquess Conyngham*)

366 James Edward William Theobald Lord Ormonde. (*Marquess of Ormonde*)

367 Francis Richard Lord Wemyss. (*Earl of Wemyss*)

368 Thomas Lord Silchester. (*Earl of Longford*)

369 Algernon William John Clotworthy Lord Oriel. (*Viscount Massereene*)

370 Arthur Thomas Lord Ravensworth

371 Hugh Lord Delamere

372 Cecil Theodore Lord Forester

373 John William Lord Rayleigh

374 Edric Frederic Lord Gifford

375 Hubert George Lord Somerhill. (*Marquess of Clanricarde*)

376 James Ludovic Lord Wigan. (*Earl of Crawford*)

377 Uchter John Mark Lord Ranfurly. (*Earl of Ranfurly*)

378 Charles Stuart Henry Lord Tenterden

379 William Lee Lord Plunket

380 Leonard Lord Heytesbury

381 Archibald Philip Lord Rosebery. (*Earl of Rosebery*)

382 Arthur Vesey Lord Clanwilliam (*Earl of Clanwilliam*)

383 Philip George Lord Wynford

384 Charles Gore Lord Kilmarnock. (*Earl of Erroll*)

385 Arthur James Francis Lord Fingall. (*Earl of Fingall*)

386 Osbert Cecil Lord Sefton. (*Earl of Sefton*)
387 Charles Lord Clements. (*Earl of Leitrim*)
388 Geoffrey Thomas Lord Kenlis. (*Marquess of Headfort*)
389 Reginald Lord Chaworth. (*Earl of Meath*)
390 Alexander Edward Lord Dunmore. (*Earl of Dunmore*)
391 Augustus Frederick George Warwick Lord Poltimore
392 Llewelyn Nevill Vaughan Lord Mostyn
393 Arthur Henry Lord Templemore
394 Valentine Frederick Lord Cloncurry
395 James St. Vincent Lord de Saumarez
396 Thomas Lord Denman
397 Shelley Leopold Laurence Lord Abinger
398 Philip Lord De L'Isle and Dudley
399 Francis Denzil Edward Lord Ashburton
400 Edward George Percy Lord Hatherton
401 Archibald Brabazon Sparrow Lord Worlingham. (*Earl of Gosford*)
402 Hallyburton George Lord Stratheden
403 Geoffrey Henry Browne Lord Oranmore and Browne. (*Elected for Ireland*)
404 Simon Joseph Lord Lovat
405 William Spencer Lord Bateman
406 Algernon Hawkins Thomond Lord Kintore. (*Earl of Kintore*)
407 Derrick Warner William Lord Rossmore
408 Robert Shapland George Julian Lord Carew
409 William Ashley Webb Lord De Mauley
410 Arthur Lord Wrottesley
411 Charles Douglas Richard Lord Sudeley
412 Paul Sanford Lord Methuen
413 Edward Lyulph Lord Stanley of Alderley
414 Francis Dudley Lord Leigh
415 Beilby Lord Wenlock
416 William Lord Lurgan
417 Thomas Spring Lord Monteagle of Brandon
418 John Reginald Upton Lord Seaton
419 John Hew North Gustave Henry Lord Oxenfoord. (*Earl of Stair*)
420 George Crespigny Brabazon Lord Vivian
421 Henry Bligh Fortescue Lord Congleton
422 Charles Bertram Lord Bellew. (*Elected for Ireland*)
423 Victor Alexander Lord Elgin. (*Earl of Elgin and Kincardine*)
424 Arthur Lord de Freyne
425 Edward Burtenshaw Lord Saint Leonards
426 George Fitz-Roy Henry Lord Raglan
427 Valentine Charles Lord Kenmare. (*Earl of Kenmare*)
428 Henry Lord Belper
429 Richard Wogan Lord Talbot de Malahide
430 Robert Wellesley Lord Ebury
431 John Compton Lord Chesham
432 Frederic John Napier Lord Chelmsford
433 John Lord Churston
434 Charles Henry Lord Leconfield
435 Courtenay Robert Percy Lord Lyveden
436 Henry Charles Lord Brougham and Vaux
437 Arthur Fitz-Gerald Lord Kinnaird
438 Richard Luttrell Pilkington Lord Westbury
439 Charles Paget Fitzhardinge Lord Fitzhardinge
440 Luke Lord Annaly
441 William Gaspard Guy Lord Romilly
442 James Herbert Gustavus Meredyth Lord Meredyth. (*Lord Athlumney*)
443 Windham Thomas Lord Kenry. (*Earl of Dunraven and Mount-Earl*)
444 Henry Power Charles Stanley Lord Monck. (*Viscount Monck*)
445 Charles Henry Chandos Lord Hartismere. (*Lord Henniker*)

446 Hylton George Hylton Lord Hylton
447 Edward Sholto Lord Penrhyn
448 Gustavus William Lord Brancepeth. (*Viscount Boyne*)
449 John Henry Lord Kesteven
450 Arthur Lord Ormathwaite
451 Edward Lord O'Neill
452 Robert William Lord Napier
453 Jenico William Joseph Lord Gormanston. (*Viscount Gormanston*)
454 Thomas Kane Lord Rathdonnell. (*Elected for Ireland*)
455 John Hamilton Lord Lawrence
456 John Lord Dunning. (*Lord Rollo*)
457 Charles Noel Lord Balinhard. (*Earl of Southesk*)
458 William Lord Hare. (*Earl of Listowel*)
459 Francis Edward Lord Howard of Glossop
460 Bernard Edward Barnaby Lord Castletown
461 Richard Maximilian Lord Acton
462 Frederick Lord Wolverton
463 Algernon William Fulke Lord Greville
464 Maurice Herbert Ignatius Towneley Lord O'Hagan
465 William Lord Sandhurst
466 William John George Lord Ettrick. (*Lord Napier*)
467 Sidney James Lord Somerton. (*Earl of Normanton*)
468 Henry Campbell Lord Aberdare
469 Henry James Lord Moncreiff
470 Bernard John Seymour Lord Coleridge
471 Thomas William Gaston Lord Emly
472 Thomas Francis Lord Cottesloe
473 Herbert Stuart Lord Hampton
474 Charles Alexander Lord Douglas (*Earl of Home*)
475 Arthur George Maule Lord Ramsay (*Earl of Dalhousie*)
476 John Henry Lord Fermanagh. (*Earl Erne*)
477 George Ralph Charles Lord Harlech
478 Humphrey Napier Lord Alington
479 Bentley Lyonel John Lord Tollemache
480 Frederic John Lord Gerard
481 Lionel Sackville Lord Sackville
482 Charles Leigh Lord Norton
483 Walter Bulkeley Lord Shute. (*Viscount Barrington*)
484 Lawrence William Lord Haldon
485 Ivor Bertie Lord Wimborne
486 Arthur Edward Lord Ardilaun
487 Charles Wallace Alexander Napier Lord Lamington
488 Arthur William Lord Trevor
489 Edward Lord Brabourne
490 Arthur Oliver Villiers Lord Ampthill
491 William Montagu Lord Tweeddale. (*Marquess of Tweeddale*)
492 William Ulick Tristram Lord Howth. (*Earl of Howth*)
493 Donald James Lord Reay
494 Harcourt Lord Derwent
495 Henry James Lord Hothfield
496 Edward Lord Tweedmouth
497 Hallam Lord Tennyson
498 James Lord Strathspey. (*Earl of Seafield*)
499 John William Lord Monk Bretton
500 Walter Henry Lord Northbourne
501 Arthur Jocelyn Charles Lord Sudley. (*Earl of Arran*)
502 Marmaduke Francis Lord Herries
503 Mervyn Richard Lord Powerscourt
504 Frederic Lord Northington. (*Lord Henley*)
505 Nathaniel Mayer Lord Rothschild
506 John Lord Revelstoke
507 Robert Lord Monkswell
508 Edward Lord Ashbourne
509 Rowland Lord Saint Oswald
510 Robert Wilfrid Lord Deramore
511 John Walter Edward Lord Montagu of Beaulieu
512 Sidney Herbert Lord Elphinstone
513 Richard Farrer Lord Herschell
514 Charles William Lord Hillingdon
515 Charles Lord Hindlip
516 Ernest William Lord Grimthorpe
517 Richard de Aquila Lord Stalbridge
518 Hugh Lord Kensington

519 Michael Arthur Lord Burton
520 Gavin George Lord Hamilton of Dalzell
521 Thomas Lord Brassey
522 Edward Lord Macnaghten. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary*)
523 Claude George Lord Bowes. (*Earl of Strathmore and Kinghorn*)
524 George Edmund Milnes Lord Monckton. (*Viscount Galway*)
525 John Lord Saint Levan
526 Dudley Stuart Lord Magheramorne
527 George Limbrey Lord Basing
528 William Henry Lord de Ramsey
529 Herbert Francis Lord Cheylesmore
530 Egerton Lord Addington
531 John Savile Lord Savile
532 George Lord Mount Stephen
533 Samuel Lord Masham
534 George Lord Ashcombe
535 Archibald Campbell Lord Blythswood
536 Thomas Lord Crawshaw
537 William Amhurst Lord Amherst of Hackney
538 Thomas Wodehouse Lord Newton
539 Henry Lyle Lord Dunleath
540 John Allan Lord Llangattock
541 George James Lord Playfair
542 Ernest Ambrose Lord Swansea
543 Thomas Cecil Lord Farrer
544 John Campbell Lord Overtoun
545 Arthur Lord Stanmore
546 Stuart Lord Rendel
547 Reginald Earle Lord Welby
548 Edward Douglas Lord Loch
549 Sydney James Lord Wandsworth
550 James Lord Ashton
551 Herbert Coulstoun Lord Burghclere
552 Henry Lord James
553 David Robert Lord Rathmore
554 Algernon Lord Glenesk
555 Alban George Henry Lord Aldenham
556 Edward Lord Heneage
557 Hercules Arthur Temple Lord Rosmead
558 Alexander Smith Lord Kinnear
559 Joseph Lord Lister
560 David Lord Fairlie. (*Earl of Glasgow*)
561 Hugh Richard Lord Dawnay. (*Viscount Downe*)
562 Henry Ludlow Lord Ludlow
563 Hans Wellesley Lord Holm Patrick
564 James Cleland Lord Inverclyde
565 Donald Alexander Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal
566 James Henry Cecil Lord Newlands
567 Horace Brand Lord Farquhar
568 Josslyn Francis Lord Muncaster
569 George Nathaniel Lord Curzon of Kedleston. (*Elected for Ireland*)
570 Joseph Henry Russell Lord Glanusk
571 Bertram Francis Lord Cranworth
572 James Patrick Bannerman Lord Robertson. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary*)
573 Henry Stafford Lord Northcote
574 John Lord Avebury
575 Nathaniel Lord Lindley.
576 Martin Henry Lord Killanin.
577 Peter Lord O'Brien
578 Richard Everard Lord Alverstone
579 Patrick Lord Kinross
580 Ughtred James Lord Shuttleworth
581 William Lawies Lord Allerton
582 Arthur Hugh Lord Barrymore
583 Francis Wallace Lord Grenfell
584 Francis Lord Knollys
585 Algernon Bertram Lord Redesdale
586 Edward Levy Lord Burnham.
587 Michael Lord Biddulph.
588 George Thomas John Lord Estcourt
589 William Henry Armstrong Fitz-Patrick Lord Armstrong.
590 Andrew Graham Lord Dunedin
591 Alexander John Lord Leith of Fyvie
592 John Lord Atkinson. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary*)
593 Charles Lord Ritchie of Dundee
594 Thomas Henry Lord Sanderson
595 William Hood Lord Waleran
596 Henry Meysey Lord Knaresborough
597 Alfred Charles William Lord Northcliffe

598 Herbert Lord Michelham
599 Edmund Beckett Lord Faber
600 William Henry Lord Desborough
601 Robert Threshie Lord Loreburn. (*In another place as Lord High Chancellor*)
602 Edmond George Petty Lord Fitzmaurice
603 Philip James Lord Weardale
604 Arthur Divett Lord Haversham
605 Charles Hare Lord Hemphill
606 James Lord Joicey
607 Charles Henry Lord Nunburnholme
608 William Henry Lord Winterstoke
609 Edward Arthur Lord Colebrooke
610 Leonard Henry Lord Courtney of Penwith
611 George John Lord Eversley
612 William James Lord Pirrie
613 John Jones Lord Glantawe
614 George Lord Armitstead
615 Wentworth Canning Blackett Lord Allendale
616 Richard Henn Lord Collins. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary*).
617 James Lord Airedale
618 Montague Lord Swaythling
619 James Lord Blyth
620* Alexander Lord Peckover

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* This number is in excess of the total Number of Lords Spiritual and Temporal, the Discrepancy being caused by the following Lords being twice named in the Roll :

Lord Loreburn as Lord High Chancellor and as Lord Loreburn (Nos. 5 and 601).

Earl of Crewe as Lord President and as Earl of Crewe (Nos. 7 and 192).

Marquess of Ripon as Lord Privy Seal and as Marquess of Ripon (Nos. 8 and 48).

Earl of Liverpool as Lord Steward and as Earl of Liverpool (Nos. 54 and 149)

Viscount Althorp as Lord Chamberlain and as Viscount Althorp (Nos. 199 and 240)

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS

IN THE

THIRD SESSION OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT OF
THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND
AND THE SECOND OF KING EDWARD VII.

(Compiled at the Opening of the Session.)

A

Abraham, William (Glamorgan, Rhondda)
Abraham, William (Cork Co., N.E.)
Acland, F. D. (Yorkshire, Richmond)
Acland-Hood, Rt. Hon. Sir A., Bt. (Somerset, Wellington)
Adkins, W. R. (Lancashire S.E., Middleton)
Agar-Robartes (Cornwall, St. Austell)
Agnew, George William (Salford, W.)
Ainsworth, John S. (Argyll)
Alden, P. (Middlesex, Tottenham)
Allen, A. A. (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Gloucester, Stroud)
Ambrose, Dr. Robert (Mayo, W.)
Anson, Sir William R., Bt. (Oxford University)
Anstruther-Gray, Major (St. Andrews Burghs)
Arkwright, John S. (Hereford)
Armitage, R. (Leeds, Central)
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hon. H. O. (Croydon)
Ashley, W. W. (Lancashire, N., Blackpool)
Ashton, Thomas Gair (Beds., Luton)
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbert H. (Fife, E.)
Astbury, J. M., K.C. (Lancashire, Southport)
Atherley-Jones, Llewellyn (Durham, N. W.)
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hon. Sir H., Bt. (Sussex, Lewes)

B

Baker, J. Allen (Finsbury, E.)
Baker, Sir J. (Portsmouth)
Balcarres, Lord (Lancashire, N., Chorley)
Baldwin, Alfred (Worcester, Bewdley)
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (City of London)
Balfour, R. (Lanark, Partick)
Banbury, Sir F. G. (City of London)
Baring, G. (Isle of Wight)
Baring, Hon. G. V. (Winchester)
Barker, J. (Penryn and Falmouth)
Barlow, Sir John Emmott (Somerset, Frome)
Barlow, P. (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B. (Kidderminster)
Barnes, J. N. (Glasgow, Blackfriars)
Barran, Rowland H. (Leeds, N.)
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.)
Barry, Edward (Cork Co., S.)
Barry, Redmond (Tyrone, N.)
Beach, Hon. M. Hicks (Gloucester, Tewkesbury)
Beale, W. P. (Ayrshire, S.)
Beauchamp, H. W. (Suffolk, Lowestoft)
Beaumont, H. (Sussex, Eastbourne)
Beck, A. C. (Cambridge, Wisbech)
Beckett, Hon. Gervase (York, N.R., Whitby)

Bell, Richard (Derby)
Bellairs, C. (Lynn Regis)
Belloc, Hilaire V. P. R. (Salford, S.)
Benn, Sir John (Devonport)
Benn, W. W. (Tower Hamlets, St. George)
Bennett, E. N. (Oxfordshire, Woodstock)
Berridge, T. H. D. (Warwick and Leamington)
Bertram, J. (Herts, Hitchin)
Bethell, E. H. (Essex, Maldon)
Bethell, Sir J. H. (Essex, Romford)
Bignold, Sir Arthur (Wick Burghs)
Billson, A. (Staffordshire, N.W.)
Birrell, Rt. Hon. A. (Bristol, N.)
Black, A. W. (Beds, Biggleswade)
Boland, John P. (Kerry, South)
Bottomley, H. W. (Hackney, S.)
Boulton, A. C. F. (Hunts, Ramsey)
Bowerman, C. W. (Deptford)
Bowles, G. Stewart (Lambeth, Norwood)
Boyle, Sir E., Bt. (Taunton)
Brace, W. (Glamorgan, S.)
Bramsdon, T. A. (Portsmouth)
Branch, J. (Middlesex, Enfield)
Bridgeman, W. C. (Shropshire, Oswestry)
Brigg, John (Yorks, W.R., Keighley)
Bright, J. A. (Oldham)
Brocklehurst, C. B. (Cheshire, Macclesfield)
Brodie, H. C. (Surrey, Reigate)
Brooke, G. S. (Tower Hamlets, Bow and Bromley)
Brotherton, E. A. (Wakefield)
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancashire, S.W., Leigh)
Brunner, Sir John T., Bt. (Cheshire, Northwich)
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas R. (Perthshire, E.)
Buckmaster, S. O. (Cambridge)
Bull, Sir William James (Hammersmith)
Burdett-Coutts, W. L. A. B. (Westminster)
Burke, E. Haviland (King's County, Tullamore)
Burns, Rt. Hon. John (Battersea)
Burnyeat, W. J. D. (Whitehaven)
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas (Morpeth)
Butcher, S. H. (Cambridge University)
Buxton, Rt. Hon. Sydney C. (Tower Hamlets, Poplar)
Byles, William Pollard (Salford, N.)

C

Cairns, T. (Newcastle-on-Tyne)
Caldwell, James (Lanark, Mid.)
Cameron, Robert (Durham, Houghton-le-Spring)
Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. H. M. (Dublin University)
Campbell-Bannerman, Rt. Hon. Sir H., G.C.B. (Stirling Burghs)
Carlile, E. H. (Herts, St. Albans)
Carr-Gomm, H. W. (Southwark, Rotherhithe)
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir E. H. (Dublin University)
Castlereagh, Lord (Maidstone)
Causton, Rt. Hon. Richard Knight (Southwark, W.)
Cave, G. (Surrey, Kingston)
Cavendish, Rt. Hon. V. C. W. (Derbyshire, W.)
Cawley, Sir Frederick (Lancs., Prestwich)
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord J. P. Joicey (Lincolnshire, Stamford)
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birmingham, W.)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. Austen (Worcestershire, E.)
Chance, F. W. (Carlisle)
Channing, Sir Francis (Northants, E.)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. H. H. (Surrey, Wimbledon)
Cheetham, J. F. (Stalybridge)
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R. (Liverpool, Exchange)
Churchill, Rt. Hon. Winston L. S. (Manchester, N.W.)
Clancy, John J. (Dublin Co., N.)
Clark, C. G. (Camberwell, Peckham)
Clark, George (Belfast, N.)
Cleland, J. W. (Glasgow, Bridgeton)
Clive, Captain (Herefordshire, Ross)
Clough, W. (Yorks, W.R., Skipton)
Clynes, J. R. (Manchester, N.E.)
Coates, Major E. F. (Lewisham)
Coates, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew, W.)

Cobbold, Felix Thornley (Ipswich)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. (Ayrshire, N.)
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse (Birmingham, Bordesley)
Collins, S. (Lambeth, Kennington)
Collins, Sir W. J. (St. Pancras, W.)
Condon, Thomas J. (Tipperary, E.)
Cooper, Dr. G. (Southwark, Bermondsey)
Corbett, Arch. Cameron (Glasgow, Tradeston)
Corbett, C. H. (Sussex, East Grinstead)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, N.)
Cornwall, Sir E. A. (Bethnal Green, N.E.)
Cory, C. J. (Cornwall, St. Ives)
Cotton, Sir H. J. S. (Nottingham, E.)
Courthope, G. L. (Sussex, Rye)
Cowan, W. H. (Surrey, Guildford)
Cox, Harold (Preston)
Craig, Charles C. (Antrim, S.)
Craig, H. J. (Tynemouth)
Craig, Capt. J. (Down, E.)
Craik, Sir H. (Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities)
Crean, Eugene (Cork, S.E.)
Cremer, Sir Randal (Shoreditch, Haggerston)
Crombie, John William (Kincardineshire)
Crooks, W. (Woolwich)
Crosfield, A. H. (Warrington)
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow, Camlachie)
Crossley, W. J. (Cheshire, Altrincham)
Cullinan, J. (Tipperary, S.)
Curran, Peter (Durham, Jarrow)

D

Dalmeny, Lord (Edinburgh, Midlothian)
Dalrymple, Lord (Wigton)
Dalziel, James H. (Kirkcaldy Burghs)
Davies, David (Montgomeryshire)
Davies, Ellis (Carnarvonshire, Eifion)
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Delany, William (Queen's Co., Ossory)
Devlin, Joseph (Belfast, W.)
Dewar, A. (Edinburgh, S.)
Dewar, Sir John S. (Inverness)
Dickinson, W. H (St. Pancras, N.)
Dickson-Poynder, Sir J., Bt. (Wilts, Chippenham)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir C. W., Bt. (Gloucester, Forest of Dean)
Dillon, John (Mayo, E.)
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. D., Bt. (Middlesex, Uxbridge)
Dobson, T. W. (Plymouth)
Donelan, Capt. A. J. C. (Cork, E.)
Doughty, Sir George (Great Grimsby)
Douglas, Rt. Hon. Aretas Akers (Kent, St. Augustine's)
Duckworth, J. (Stockport)
Du Cros, Harvey (Hastings)
Duffy, William J. (Galway, S.)
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness)
Duncan, J. Hastings (Yorks, W.R., Otley)
Duncan, R. (Lanark, Govan)
Dunn, A. E. (Cornwall, Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)

E

Edwards, A. C. (Denbigh District)
Edwards, E. (Hanley)
Edwards, Sir Francis (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of (Peebles and Selkirk)
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward (Nottingham, Rushcliffe)
Emmott, Alfred (Oldham)
Erskine, D. C. (Perthshire, W.)
Esmonde, Sir T. Grattan, Bt. (Wexford, N.)
Essex, R. W. (Gloucestershire, Cirencester)
Esslemont, G. B. (Aberdeen, S.)
Evans, Sir Samuel (Glamorgan, Mid.)
Everett, R. L. (Suffolk, Woodbridge)

F

Faber, G. Denison (York)
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Faber, Capt. W. V. (Hants, Andover)
Fardell, Sir T. George (Paddington, S.)
Farrell, James P. (Longford, N.)
Fell, A. (Great Yarmouth)

Fenwick, Charles (Northumberland, Wansbeck)

Ferens, T. R. (Hull, E.)

Ferguson, Ronald C. Munro (Leith Burghs)

Fetherstonhaugh, G. (Fermanagh, N.)

Ffrench, Peter (Wexford, S.)

Field, William (Dublin, St. Patrick)

Fiennes, Hon. E. E. (Oxfordshire, Banbury)

Finch, Rt. Hon. George H. (Rutland)

Findlay, Alexander (Lanark, N.E.)

Flavin, Michael Joseph (Kerry, N.)

Fletcher, J. S. (Hampstead)

Flynn, James C. (Cork, N.)

Forster, Henry Wm. (Kent, Sevenoaks)

Foster, Sir B. Walter (Derby, Ilkeston)

Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir H. H. (Wolverhampton, E.)

Freeman-Thomas, F. (Cornwall, Bodmin)

Fuller, John Michael F. (Wilts, Westbury)

Fullerton, H. (Cumberland, Egremont)

Furness, Sir Christopher (Hartlepool)

G

Gardner, Ernest (Berks, Wokingham)

Gibb, J. (Middlesex, Harrow)

Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, W.)

Gilhooly, James (Cork Co., W.)

Gill, A. H. (Bolton)

Ginnell, L. (Westmeath, N.)

Gladstone, Rt. Hon. Herbert J. (Leeds, W.)

Glendinning, R. (Antrim, N.)

Glover, T. (St. Helens)

Goddard, Daniel Ford (Ipswich)

Gooch, G. P. (Bath)

Gordon, John (Londonderry, S.)

Grant, Corrie (Warwickshire, Rugby)

Grayson, Victor (Yorks, W.R., Colne Valley)

Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)

Greenwood, H. (York)

Gretton, John (Rutland)

Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward, Bt. (Northumberland, Berwick)

Griffith, Ellis J. (Anglesey)

Grove, T. N. A. (Northants, S.)

Guest, Hon. Ivor C. (Cardiff District)

Guinness, Hon. Walter (Bury St. Edmunds)

Gulland, J. W. (Dumfries Burghs)

Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton (Norfolk, N.)

Gwynn, S. L. (Galway)

H

Haddock, G. B. (Lancashire, North Lonsdale)

Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B. (Haddington)

Hall, F. (Yorks, W.R., Normanton)

Halpin, J. (Clare, W.)

Hamilton, Marquess of (Londonderry)

Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis (Lancashire, N.E., Rossendale)

Hardie, James Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)

Hardy, G. A. (Suffolk, Stowmarket)

Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford)

Harmood-Banner, J. S. (Liverpool, Everton)

Harmsworth, C. B. (Worcester, Droitwich)

Harmsworth, R. Leicester (Caithness)

Harrington, Timothy (Dublin, Harbour)

Harris, Leverton (Tower Hamlets, Stepney)

Harrison-Broadley, Col. H. B. (Yorks, E.R., Howdenshire)

Hart-Davies, T. (Hackney, N.)

Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)

Harvey, W. E. (Derbyshire, N.E.)

Harwood, George (Bolton)

Haslam, J. (Derbyshire, Chesterfield)

Haslam, L. (Monmouth Boroughs)

Haworth, Arthur A. (Manchester, S.)

Hay, Hon. Claude G. D. (Shoreditch, Hoxton)

Hayden, John P. (Roscommon, S.)

Hazel, Dr. A. E. W. (West Bromwich)

Hazleton, R. (Galway, N.)

Healy, Timothy M. (Louth, N.)

Heaton-Armstrong, W. C. (Suffolk, Sudbury)

Heaton, J. Henniker (Canterbury)

Hedges, A. P. (Kent, Tonbridge)

Helme, Norval W. (Lancashire, N., Lancaster)

Helmsley, Lord (Yorks, N.R., Thirsk)
Hemmerde, E. G. (Denbighshire, E.)
Henderson, Arthur (Durham, Barnard Castle)
Henderson, J. McD. (Aberdeenshire, W.)
Henry, C. S. (Shropshire, Wellington)
Herbert, Col. I. (Monmouthshire, S.)
Herbert, T. A. (Bucks, Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp (Yorks, W.R., Sowerby)
Hill, Lord Arthur (Down, W.)
Hill, Sir C. L. (Shrewsbury)
Hills, J. W. (Durham)
Hobart, Sir Robert (Hants, New Forest)
Hobhouse, Charles E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Hodge, J. (Lancashire, S.E., Gorton)
Hogan, M. (Tipperary, N.)
Holden, E. H. (Lancashire, Heywood)
Holland, Sir William H. (Yorks, W.R., Rotherham)
Holt, R. D. (Northumberland, Hexham)
Hooper, A. G. (Dudley)
Hope, J. D. (Fife, W.)
Hope, W. H. B. (Somerset, N.)
Hornby, Sir Wm. Henry, Bt. (Blackburn)
Horniman, E. J. (Chelsea)
Horridge, Thomas G. (Manchester, E.)
Houston, Robert P. (Liverpool, W. Toxteth)
Howard, Hon. G. (Cumberland, Eskdale)
Hudson, W. (Newcastle-on-Tyne)
Hunt, Rowland (Shropshire, Ludlow)
Hutton, Alfred E. (Yorks, W.R., Morley)
Hyde, C. G. (Wednesbury)

I

Idris, T. H. (Flint Boroughs)
Illingworth, P. (Yorks, W.R., Shipley)
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel (Reading)

J

Jackson, R. S. (Greenwich)
Jacoby, Sir James Alfred (Derbyshire, Mid)
Jardine, Sir J. (Roxburghshire)
Jenkins, J. (Chatham)
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Warwickshire, Nuneaton)
Jones, Sir D. Brynmor (Swansea District)
Jones, Leif (Westmoreland, Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvon, Arfon)
Jordan, Jeremiah (Fermanagh, S.)
Jowett, F. W. (Bradford, W.)
Joyce, M. (Limerick)

K

Kearley, Hudson E. (Devonport)
Kekewich, Sir G. W. (Exeter)
Kelley, G. D. (Manchester, S.W.)
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir J. H., Bt., C.B. (Devon, Honiton)
Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan, W.)
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hon. Col. Wm. (Shropshire, Newport)
Keswick, William (Surrey, Epsom)
Kettle, T. M. (Tyrone, E.)
Kilbride, Dennis (Kildare, S.)
Kimber, Sir Henry, Bt. (Wandsworth)
Kincaid-Smith, Capt. (Warwickshire, Stratford-on-Avon)
King, A. J. (Cheshire, Knutsford)
King, Sir H. Seymour (Hull, Central)

L

Laidlaw, R. (Renfrew, E.)
Lamb, Edmund (Hereford, Leominster)
Lamb, E. H. (Rochester)
Lambert, George (Devon, South Molton)
Lambton, Hon. F. W. (Durham, S.E.)
Lamont, Norman (Buteshire)
Lane-Fox, G. (Yorks, W.R., Barkston Ash)
Langley, J. Batty (Sheffield, Attercliffe)
Lardner, J. C. R. (Monaghan, W.)
Law, A. Bonar (Camberwell, Dulwich)
Law, Hugh A. (Donegal, W.)
Layland-Barratt, F. (Devon, Torquay)
Lea, Hugh Cecil (St. Pancras, E.)
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants, Fareham)
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Lancashire, N.E., Accrington)
Lehmann, R. C. (Leicester, Market Harborough)

Lever, A. L. (Essex, Harwich)
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirrall)
Levy, Sir Maurice (Leicestershire, Loughborough)
Lewis, John Herbert (Flintshire)
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David (Carnarvon, &c.)
Lockwood, Rt. Hon. Lt.-Col. Amelius (Essex, Epping)
Long, Col. Charles W. (Worcestershire, Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hon. Walter H. (Dublin, S.)
Lonsdale, John B. (Armagh, Mid)
Lough, Thomas (Islington, W.)
Lowe, Sir Francis W. (Birmingham, Edgbaston)
Lowther, Rt. Hon. James William (Cumberland, Penrith)
Lundon, W. (Limerick, E.)
Lupton, A. (Lincolnshire, Sleaford)
Luttrell, H. F. (Devon, Tavistock)
Lyell, C. H. (Dorset, E.)
Lynch, H. F. B. (Yorks, W.R., Ripon)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. A. (St. George's, Hanover Square)

M

Macdonald, J. A. M. (Falkirk Burghs)
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Mackarness, F. C. (Berks, Newbury)
Maclean, D. (Bath)
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J. (Camberwell, North)
MacNeill, J. G. Swift (Donegal, S.)
Macpherson, J. T. (Preston)
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.)
MacVeigh, C. (Donegal, E.)
McArthur, Charles (Liverpool, Kirkdale)
McCallum, J. (Paisley)
McCalmont, Colonel James (Antrim, E.)
McCrae, George (Edinburgh, E.)
McHugh, Patrick A. (Sligo, N., and Leitrim, N.)
McIver, Sir Lewis, Bt. (Edinburgh, W.)
M'Kean, J. (Monaghan, S.)
McKenna, Rt. Hon. Reginald (Monmouth, N.)
M'Killop, W. (Armagh, S.)
McLaren, Sir C. B. Bright, Bt. (Leicester, Bosworth)
McLaren, H. D. (Staffordshire, W.)
McMicking, Major G. (Kirkcudbrightshire)
Maddison, F. (Burnley)
Magnus, Sir P. (London University)
Mallet, C. E. (Plymouth)
Manfield, H. (Northants, Mid.)
Mansfield, H. R. (Lincoln, Spalding)
Markham, A. B. (Notts., Mansfield)
Marks, G. C. (Cornwall, Launceston)
Marks, H. H. (Kent, Thanet)
Marnham, F. J. (Surrey, Chertsey)
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Mason, J. F. (Windsor)
Massie, Dr. J. (Wilts, Cricklade)
Masterman, C. F. G. (West Ham, N.)
Meagher, M. (Kilkenny, N.)
Meehan, P. A. (Queen's County, Leix)
Menzies, W. (Lanark, S.)
Meysey-Thompson, E. C. (Stafford, Handsworth)
Micklem, N., K.C. (Herts, Watford)
Middlemore, John T. (Birmingham, N.)
Mildmay, Francis B. (Devon, Totnes)
Mitchell-Thomson, W. (Lanark, N.W.)
Molteno, P. A. (Dumfriesshire)
Mond, A. (Chester)
Money, L. G. Chiozza- (Paddington, N.)
Montagu, E. S. (Cambs., Chesterton)
Montgomery, H. G. (Somerset, Bridgwater)
Mooney, John J. (Newry)
Moore, W. (Armagh, N.)
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall, Truro)
Morgan, John Lloyd (Carmarthen, W.)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John (Montrose, &c.)
Morpeth, Lord (Birmingham, S.)
Morrell, P. (Oxon, Henley)
Morrison-Bell, Capt. (Devonshire, Ashburton)
Morse, L. L. (Wilts, Wilton)
Morton, A. C. (Sutherland)
Muldoon, John (Wicklow, E.)
Muntz, Sir Philip Albert, Bt. (Warwickshire, Tamworth)

Murnaghan, George (Tyrone, Mid.)
Murphy, John (Kerry, E.)
Murphy, N. J. (Kilkenny, S.)
Murray, James (Aberdeenshire, E.)
Myer, Horatio (Lambeth, N.)

N

Nannetti, Joseph P. (Dublin, College Green)
Napier, T. B. (Kent, Faversham)
Newnes, F. (Notts., Bassetlaw)
Newnes, Sir George, Bt. (Swansea Town)
Nicholls, G. (Northants, N.)
Nicholson, C. N. (Yorks, W.R., Doncaster)
Nicholson, William G. (Hants., Petersfield)
Nield, H. (Middlesex, Ealing)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, S.)
Norman, Sir Henry (Wolverhampton, S.)
Norton, Capt. Cecil W. (Newington, W.)
Nugent, Sir Walter (Westmeath, S.)
Nussey, Thomas Willans (Pontefract)
Nuttall, H. (Lancashire, S.E., Stretford)

O

O'Brien, K. E. (Tipperary, Mid)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, Thomas P. (Liverpool, Scotland)
O'Doherty, P. (Donegal, N.)
O'Donnell, C. J. (Newington, Walworth)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, Thomas (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John (Sligo, S.)
O'Grady, J. (Leeds, E.)
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.)
O'Malley, William (Galway, Connemara)
O'Neill, Hon. R. Torrens (Antrim, Mid)
O'Shaughnessy, P. J. (Limerick, W.)
O'Shee, James John (Waterford, W.)

P

Parker, Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Parker, J. (Halifax)
Parkes, Ebenezer (Birmingham, Central)
Partington, Oswald (Derbyshire, High Peak)
Paul, H. W. (Northampton)
Paulton, James M. (Durham, Bishop Auckland)
Pearce, R. (Staffordshire, Leek)
Pearce, W. (Tower Hamlets, Limehouse)
Pearson, Sir Weetman D., Bt. (Colchester)
Pearson, W. H. M. (Suffolk, Eye)
Pease, H. Pike (Darlington)
Pease, Joseph A. (Essex, Saffron Walden)
Percy, Lord (Kensington, S.)
Perks, Robert W. (Lincolnshire, Louth)
Philipps, Lt.-Col. Ivor (Southampton)
Philipps, John W. (Pembroke)
Philipps, O. C. (Pembroke and Haverfordwest)
Pickersgill, E. H. (Bethnal Green, S.W.)
Pirie, Duncan Vernon (Aberdeen, North)
Pollard, Dr. G. H. (Lancashire, S.E., Eccles)
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp, Bt. (Wigan)
Power, Patrick J. (Waterford, E.)
Price, C. E. (Edinburgh, Central)
Price, Robert John (Norfolk, East)
Priestley, Arthur (Grantham)
Priestley, W. E. B. (Bradford, E.)
Pullar, Sir Robert (Perth)

R

Radford, G. H. (Islington, E.)
Rainy, A. R. (Kilmarnock Burghs)
Randles, Sir J. S. (Cumberland, Cockermouth)
Raphael, H. H. (Derbyshire, S.)
Rasch, Major Sir Fred. C., Bt. (Essex, Chelmsford)
Ratcliff, R. F. (Staffordshire, Burton)
Rawlinson, J. F. P. (Cambridge University)
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, W. R. (Scarborough)
Reddy, M. (King's County, Birr)
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William H. K. (Clare, E.)
Rees, J. D. (Montgomery Boroughs)
Remnant, James F. (Finsbury, Holborn)
Rendall, A. (Gloucester, Thornbury)

Renton, Major L. (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough)

Richards, Thomas (Monmouthshire, W.)

Richards, T. F. (Wolverhampton, W.)

Richardson, A. (Nottingham, S.)

Rickett, J. Compton (Yorks., W.R., Osgoldcross)

Ridsdale, E. A. (Brighton)

Roberts, C. H. (Lincoln)

Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)

Roberts, John Herbert (Denbighshire, W.)

Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield, Ecclesall)

Robertson, Rt. Hn. Edmund (Dundee)

Robertson, Sir G. Scott (Bradford, Central)

Robertson, J. M. (Northumberland, Tyneside)

Robinson, S. (Brecknock)

Robson, Sir Wm. Snowdon (South Shields)

Roche, Augustine (Cork)

Roche, John (Galway, E.)

Roe, Sir Thomas (Derby)

Rogers, F. N. (Wilts, Devizes)

Ronaldshay, Earl of (Middlesex, Hornsey)

Ropner, Colonel Sir E. H. O. R., Bt. (Stockton)

Rose, Charles D. (Cambridge, Newmarket)

Rothschild, Hon. Lionel W. (Bucks, Aylesbury)

Rowlands, J. (Kent, Dartford)

Runciman, Walter (Dewsbury)

Russell, Thomas W. (Tyrone, S.)

Rutherford, John (Lancashire, N.E., Darwen)

Rutherford, Dr. V. H. (Middlesex, Brentford)

Rutherford, William W. (Liverpool, W. Derby)

S

Salter, A. Clavell (Hampshire, Basingstoke)

Samuel, Herbert Louis (Yorkshire, Cleveland)

Samuel, Stuart M. (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel)

Sandys, Col. Thomas M. (Lancashire, Bootle)

Sassoon, Sir Edward A., Bt. (Hythe)

Scarisbrick, T. L. (Dorset, S.)

Schwann, C. D. (Cheshire, Hyde)

Schwann, Charles E. (Manchester, N.)

Scott, A. H. (Ashton-under-Lyne)

Scott, Sir Samuel E., Bt. (Marylebone, W.)

Sears, J. E. (Cheltenham)

Seaverns, J. H. (Lambeth, Brixton)

Seddon, J. R. (Lancashire, S.W., Newton)

Seely, Col. J. E. B. (Liverpool, Abercromby)

Shackleton, David (Lancashire, N.E., Clitheroe)

Shaw, Charles Edward (Stafford)

Shaw, Rt. Hon. Thomas (Hawick Burghs)

Sheehan, Daniel D. (Cork Co., Mid)

Sheehy, David (Meath, S.)

Sheffield, Sir Berkeley (Lincolnshire, Brigg)

Sherwell, A. J. (Huddersfield)

Shipman, Dr. John G. (Northampton)

Silcock, T. B. (Somerset, Wells)

Simon, J. A. (Essex, Walthamstow)

Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John (Forfarshire)

Sloan, Thomas H. (Belfast, S.)

Smeaton, D. M. (Stirlingshire)

Smith, Abel Henry (Herts, Hertford)

Smith, F. E. (Liverpool, Walton)

Smith, Hon. W. Fred D. (Strand, Westminster)

Smyth, T. (Leitrim, S.)

Snowden, P. (Blackburn)

Soames, Arthur W. (Norfolk, S.)

Soares, Ernest J. (Devon, Barnstaple)

Spicer, Sir A. (Hackney, Central)

Stanger, H. Y. (Kensington, N.)

Stanley, Hon. A. L. (Cheshire, Eddisbury)

Stanley, Albert (Staffordshire, N.W.)

Stanley, Hon. Arthur (Lancashire, S.W., Ormskirk)

Starkey, J. R. (Notts, Newark)

Staveley-Hill, H. (Staffordshire, Kingswinford)

Steadman, W. C. (Finsbury, Central)

Stewart, H. (Greenock)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Westmoreland, Kendal)
Stone, Sir John Benjamin (Birmingham, E.)
Strachey, Sir Edward, Bt. (Somerset, S.)
Straus, B. S. (Tower Hamlets, Mile End)
Strauss, A. E. (Berks, Abingdon)
Stuart, J. (Sunderland)
Summerbell, T. (Sunderland)
Sutherland, J. E. (Elgin Burghs)

T

Talbot, Lord Edmund (Sussex, Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hon. John G. (Oxford University)
Taylor, Austin (Liverpool, E. Toxteth)
Taylor, J. W. (Durham, Chester-le-Street)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Lancashire, S.E., Radcliffe)
Tennant, Sir E. P. (Salisbury)
Tennant, Harold John (Berwickshire)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthenshire, E.)
Thomas, Sir Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr Tydvil)
Thomasson, F. (Leicester)
Thompson, J. W. H. (Somerset, E.)
Thorne, Will (West Ham, S.)
Thornton, Percy M. (Clapham)
Tillett, Louis John (Norwich)
Tomkinson, James (Cheshire, Crewe)
Torrance, A. M. (Glasgow, Central)
Toulmin, George (Bury, Lancashire)
Trevelyan, Charles P. (Yorks, W.R., Elland)
Tuke, Sir John Batty (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities)

U

Ure, Alexander (Linlithgow)

V

Valentia, Rt. Hon. Lord (Oxford)
Verney, F. W. (Bucks, N.)
Villiers, Ernest Amherst (Brighton)
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard (Sheffield, Central)
Vivian, Henry (Birkenhead)

W

Wadsworth, J. (York, W.R., Hallamshire)
Waldron, L. A. (Dublin, St. Stephen's Green)
Walker, H. de R. (Leicestershire, Melton)
Walker, Col. William H. (Lancashire, S.W., Widnes)
Walrond, Hon. L. (Devon, Tiverton)
Walsh, S. (Lancashire, S.W., Ince)
Walters, J. T. (Sheffield, Brightside)
Walton, Joseph (Yorks, W.R., Barnsley)
Ward, J. (Stoke-on-Trent)
Ward, W. D. (Southampton)
Warde, Col. Charles E. (Kent, Medway)
Wardle, G. J. (Stockport)
Waring, W. (Banffshire)
Warner, T. Courtenay T. (Stafford, Lichfield)
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan and Kinross)
Wason, J. Cathcart (Orkney & Shetland)
Waterlow, D. S. (Islington, N.)
Watt, H. A. (Glasgow, College)
Wedgwood, J. C. (Newcastle-under-Lyme)
Weir, James Galloway (Ross and Cromarty)
Whitbread, S. H. (Hunts, Huntingdon)
White, Sir George (Norfolk, N.W.)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (Yorks, E.R., Buckrose)
White, Patrick (Meath, N.)
Whitehead, R. (Essex, S.E.)
Whiteley, George (Yorks, W.R., Pudsey)

Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)

Whittaker, Sir Thomas P. (Yorks, W.R., Spen Valley)

Wiles, Thomas (Islington, S.)

Wilkie, A. (Dundee)

Williams, A. Osmond (Merionethshire)

Williams, J. (Glamorgan, W.)

Williams, Colonel Robert (Dorset, W.)

Williams, W. L. (Carmarthen District)

Williamson, A. (Elgin and Nairn)

Willoughby de Eresby, Lord (Lincolnshire, Horncastle)

Wills, A. W. (Dorset, N.)

Wilson, Arthur S. (Yorks, E.R., Holderness)

Wilson, Hon. Guy (Hull, W.)

Wilson, Henry Joseph (Yorks, W.R., Holmfirth)

Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)

Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)

Wilson, John William (Worcestershire, N.)

Wilson, P. Whitwell (St. Pancras, S.)

Wilson, W. T. (Lancashire, S.E., Westhoughton)

Winfrey, R. (Norfolk, S.W.)

Winterton, Earl (Sussex, Horsham)

Wodehouse, Lord (Norfolk, Mid.)

Wolff, Gustavus Wilhelm (Belfast, E.)

Wood, T. McKinnon (Glasgow, St. Rollox)

Wortley, Rt. Hon. Charles B. Stuart, K.C. (Sheffield, Hallam)

Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George (Dover)

Y

Young, Samuel (Cavan, E.)

Younger, G. (Ayr Burghs)

Yoxall, James Henry (Nottingham, W.)

HOUSE OF COMMONS

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF CONSTITUENCIES,

WITH

NAMES OF MEMBERS.

(Compiled at the Opening of the Session.)

ENGLAND AND WALES (495 Members).

ANGLESEY	Ellis Jones Griffith.
ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE	Alfred H. Scott.
ASTON MANOR	Evelyn Cecil.
BARROW-IN-FURNESS	Charles Duncan.
BATH	Donald Maclean. George Peabody Gooch
BATTERSEA AND CLAPHAM—	
Battersea	Rt. Hon. John Burns.
Clapham	Percy Melville Thornton.
BEDFORD—	
Northern or Biggleswade	A. W. Black.
Southern or Luton	Thomas Gair Ashton
BEDFORD	P. Barlow.
BERKS—	
Northern or Abingdon	E. A. Strauss.
Southern or Newbury	F. C. Mackarness.
Eastern or Wokingham	Ernest Gardner.
BETHNAL GREEN—	
North-East	Sir Edwin Andrew Cornwall.
South West	Edward Hare Pickersgill.
BIRKENHEAD	Henry Vivian.

Birmingham—	
Edgbaston	Sir Francis William Lowe.
West	Rt. Hon. Joseph Chamberlain.
Central	Ebenezer Parkes.
North	John Throgmorton Middlemore.
East	Sir John Benjamin Stone.
Bordesley	Rt. Hon. Jesse Collings.
South	Viscount Morpeth.
Blackburn	Sir William Henry Hornby, Bt. Philip Snowden.
Bolton	George Harwood. A. H. Gill.
Boston	G. H. Faber.
Bradford—	
Central	Sir George Scott Robertson.
East	W. E. B. Priestley.
West	F. W. Jowett.
Brecknock	S. Robinson.
Brighton	Ernest Amhurst Villiers. Edward Aurelian Ridsdale.
Bristol—	
West	George Abraham Gibbs.
North	Rt. Hon. A. Birrell.
East	Charles Edward Henry Hobhouse.
South	W. Howell Davies.
Bucks—	
Northern or Buckingham	Frederick W. Verney.
Mid or Aylesbury	Hon. Lionel Walter Rothschild.
Southern or Wycombe	T. Arnold Herbert.
Burnley	Frederick Maddison.
Bury (Lanc.)	George Toulmin.
Bury St. Edmunds	Hon. Walter Guinness.
Camberwell—	
North	Dr. Thomas James Macnamara.
Peckham	C. Goddard Clark.
Dulwich	A. Bonar Law.
Cambridge—	
Northern or Wisbech	A. C. Beck.
Western or Chesterton	E. S. Montagu.
Eastern or Newmarket	Charles Day Rose.
Cambridge	Stanley Owen Buckmaster.
Cambridge University	Samuel Henry Butcher J. F. P. Rawlinson.
Canterbury	J. Henniker Heaton.

Cardiff	Hon. Ivor Guest.
Cardigan	Matthew L. Vaughan Davies.
Carlisle	F. W. Chance.
Carmarthen—	
Eastern	Abel Thomas.
Western	John Lloyd Morgan.
Carmarthen, &c.	William Llewellyn Williams.
Carnarvon—	
Southern or Eifion	Ellis W. Davies.
Northern or Arfon	William Jones.
Carnarvon, &c.	Rt. Hon. David Lloyd-George.
Chatham	J. Jenkins.
Chelsea	Emslie John Horniman.
Cheltenham	John Edward Sears.
Chester—	
Wirral	W. H. Lever.
Eddisbury	Hon. A. L. Stanley.
Macclesfield	C. B. Brocklehurst.
Crewe	James Tomkinson.
Northwich	Sir John Tomlinson Brunner, Bt.
Altrincham	W. J. Crossley.
Hyde	C. D. Schwann.
Knutsford	Alfred John King.
Chester	Alfred Mond.
Christchurch	Arthur Acland Allen.
Colchester	Sir Weetman D. Pearson, Bt.
Cornwall—	
Western or St. Ives	Clifford John Cory.
North-Western or Camborne	A. E. Dunn.
Truro	G. H. Morgan.
Mid or St. Austell	Hon. T. Agar Robartes.
South-Eastern or Bodmin	F. Freeman Thomas.
North-Eastern or Launceston	G. Croydon Marks.
Coventry	Alfred Edward Woodley Mason.
Croydon	Rt. Hon. H. O. Arnold-Forster.
Cumberland—	
Northern or Eskdale	Hon. G. Howard.
Mid or Penrith	Rt. Hon. James William Lowther.
Cockermouth	Sir John S. Randles.
Western or Egremont	H. Fullerton.
Darlington	Herbert Pike Pease.

DENBIGH—	
Eastern	E. G. Hemmerde.
Western	John Herbert Roberts.
DENBIGH BOROUGHS	A. C. Edwards.
DEPTFORD	C. W. Bowerman.
DERBY—	
High Peak	Oswald Partington.
North Eastern	W. E. Harvey.
Chesterfield	J. Haslam.
Western	Rt. Hon. V. Cavendish.
Mid	Sir James Alfred Jacoby.
Ilkeston	Rt. Hon. Sir B. Walter Foster.
Southern	Herbert H. Raphael.
DERBY	Richard Bell.
	Sir Thomas Roe.
DEVON—	
Eastern or Honiton	Rt. Hon. Sir J. H. Kennaway, Bt.
North-Eastern or Tiverton	Hon. Lionel Walrond.
Northern or South Molton	George Lambert.
North-Western or Barnstaple	Ernest J. Soares.
Western or Tavistock	Hugh Fownes Luttrell.
Southern or Totnes	Francis Bingham Mildmay.
Torquay	Francis Layland-Barratt.
Mid or Ashburton	Capt. Morrison Bell.
DEVONPORT	Hudson E. Kearley.
	Sir John Williams Benn.
DEWSBURY	Walter Runciman.
DORSET—	
Northern	A. W. Wills.
Eastern	Charles Henry Lyell.
Southern	T. L. Scarisbrick.
Western	Col. Robert Williams.
DOVER	Rt. Hon. George Wyndham.
DUDLEY	Arthur George Hooper.
DURHAM—	
Jarrow	Peter Curran.
Houghton-le-Spring	Robert Cameron.
Chester-le-Street	John Wilkinson Taylor.
North-Western	Llewellyn A. Atherley Jones.
Mid	J. Wilson.
South-Eastern	Hon. Frederick Wm. Lambton
Bishop Auckland	James Mellor Paulton.
Barnard Castle	Arthur Henderson.
DURHAM	John Walter Hills.

Essex—	
South-Western or Walthamstow	John Allsebrook Simon.
Southern or Romford	Sir J. H. Bethell.
Western or Epping	Rt. Hn. Lt.-Col. A. R. M. Lockwood.
Northern or Saffron Walden	Joseph Albert Pease.
North-Eastern or Harwich	A. Levy Lever.
Eastern or Maldon	E. H. Bethell.
Mid or Chelmsford	Major Sir Fred. Carne Rasch, Bt.
South-Eastern	Rowland Whitehead.
Exeter	Sir George Kekewich.
Finsbury—	
Holborn	James Farquharson Remnant.
Central	William C. Steadman.
East	J. Allen Baker.
Flint	John Herbert Lewis.
Flint Boroughs	T. Howell Idris.
Fulham	Timothy Davies.
Gateshead	John Johnson.
Glamorgan—	
Eastern	Sir Alfred Thomas.
Rhondda	William Abraham.
Western or Gower	J. Williams.
Mid	Sir Samuel Thomas Evans.
Southern	William Brace.
Gloucester—	
Mid or Stroud	Charles Peter Allen.
Northern or Tewkesbury	Hon. M. Hicks Beach.
Eastern or Cirencester	R. W. Essex.
Forest of Dean	Rt. Hn. Sir Chas. W. Dilke, Bt.
Southern or Thornbury	A. Rendall.
Gloucester	Russell Rea.
Grantham	Arthur Priestley.
Gravesend	Sir Gilbert Parker.
Greenwich	Richard Stephen Jackson.
Gt. Grimsby	Sir George Doughty.
Gt. Yarmouth	Arthur Fell.
Hackney—	
North	T. H. Davies.
Central	Sir Albert Spicer.
South	Horatio W. Bottomley.
Halifax	John Henry Whiteley. J. Parker.
Hammersmith	Sir William James Bull.

HAMPSTEAD	J. S. Fletcher.
HANLEY	Enoch Edwards.
HANTS—	
Northern or Basingstoke	A. Clavell Salter.
Western or Andover	Capt. W. V. Faber.
Eastern or Petersfield	William Graham Nicholson.
Southern or Fareham	Arthur Hamilton Lee.
New Forest	Sir Robert Hobart.
HARTLEPOOL	Sir Christopher Furness.
HASTINGS	Harvey Du Cros.
HEREFORD—	
Northern or Leominster	Edmund Lamb.
Southern or Ross	Capt. Clive.
HEREFORD	John Stanhope Arkwright.
HERTFORD—	
Northern or Hitchin	J. Bertram.
Eastern or Hertford	Abel Henry Smith.
Mid or St. Albans	E. H. Carlile.
Western or Watford	Nathaniel Micklem, K.C.
HUDDERSFIELD	A. J. Sherwell.
HUNTINGDON—	
Southern or Huntingdon	S. Howard Whitbread.
Northern or Ramsey	A. C. Forster Boulton.
HYTHE	Sir Edward A. Sassoon, Bt.
IPSWICH	Daniel Ford Goddard. Felix Thornley Cobbold.
ISLINGTON—	
North	D. S. Waterlow.
West	Thomas Lough.
East	G. H. Radford.
South	Thomas Wiles.
KENSINGTON—	
North	Henry York Stanger.
South	Earl Percy
KENT—	
Western or Sevenoaks	Henry William Forster.
North-Western or Dartford	James Rowlands.
South-Western or Tunbridge	A. P. Hedges.
Mid or Medway	Col. Charles Edw. Warde.
North-Eastern or Faversham	T. B. Napier.
Southern or Ashford	Laurence Hardy.
Eastern or St. Augustine's	Rt. Hon. Aretas Akers-Douglas.
Isle of Thanet	H. H. Marks.
KIDDERMINSTER	Edmund Broughton Barnard.

KINGSTON-ON-HULL—	
East	Thomas R. Ferens.
Central	Sir Henry Seymour King, K.C.I.E.
West	Hon. Guy Wilson.
LAMBETH—	
North	Horatio Myer.
Kennington	Stephen Collings.
Brixton	J. H. Seaverns.
Norwood	G. Stewart Bowles.
LANCASTER, NORTH—	
North Lonsdale	George B. Haddock.
Lancaster	Norval Watson Helme.
Blackpool	W. W. Ashley.
Chorley	Lord Balcarres.
LANCASTER, NORTH-EAST—	
Darwen	John Rutherford.
Clitheroe	David James Shackleton.
Accrington	Sir Joseph Francis Leese.
Rossendale	Rt. Hon. Lewis Harcourt.
LANCASTER, SOUTH-EAST—	
Westhoughton	W. T. Wilson.
Heywood	Edward Hopkinson Holden.
Middleton	W. R. Adkins.
Radcliffe-cum-Farnworth	Theodore Cook Taylor.
Eccles	Dr. G. H. Pollard.
Stretford	H. Nuttall.
Gorton	John Hodge.
Prestwich	Sir Frederick Cawley.
LANCASTER, SOUTH-WEST—	
Southport	John Meir Astbury.
Ormskirk	Hon. Arthur Stanley.
Bootle	Colonel Thomas M. Sandys.
Widnes	Col. William Hall Walker.
Newton	James R. Seddon.
Ince	S. Walsh.
Leigh	John Fowler Leece Brunner.
LEEDS—	
North	Rowland Hirst Barran.
Central	Robert Armitage.
East	J. O'Grady.
West	Rt. Hon. Herbert J. Gladstone.
South	
LEEK DIVISION, *see* Stafford.	
LEICESTER—	
Eastern or Melton	H. de R. Walker.
Mid or Loughborough	Sir Maurice Levy.
Western or Bosworth	Sir Charles B. Bright McLaren, Bt.
Southern or Harborough	Rudulph Chambers Lehmann.
LEICESTER	F. Thomasson. James Ramsay Macdonald.

Lewisham	Major Edward Feetham Coates.
Lincoln—	
West Lindsay or Gainbsorough	Major Leslie Renton.
North Lindsay or Brigg	Sir Berkeley Sheffield.
Easy Lindsey or Louth	Robert William Perks.
South Lindsey or Horncastle	Lord Willoughby de Eresby.
North Kesteven or Sleaford	Arnold Lupton.
South Kesteven or Stamford	Lord J. Joicey-Cecil.
Holland or Spalding	Horace Rendall Mansfield.
Lincoln	Charles H. Roberts.
Liverpool—	
Kirkdale	Chas. McArthur.
Walton	Frederick Edwin Smith.
Everton	J. S. Harmood-Banner.
West Derby	William Watson Rutherford.
Scotland	Thomas P. O'Connor.
Exchange	Richard Robert Cherry.
Abercromby	Colonel J. E. B. Seely.
East Toxteth	Austin Taylor.
West Toxteth	Robert P. Houston.
London	Rt. Hon. A. J. Balfour Sir F. G. Banbury, Bt.
London University	Sir Philip Magnus.
Lynn Regis	Carlyon Bellairs.
Maidstone	Lord Castlereagh.
Manchester—	
East	Thomas Gardiner Horridge.
North	Charles E. Schwann.
North-East	J. R. Clynes.
North-West	Rt. Hon. Winston L. S. Churchill.
South	Arthur Arlington Haworth.
South-West	George D. Kelley.
Marylebone—	
East	Lord Robert Cecil.
West	Sir Samuel Edward Scott, Bt.
Merioneth	Arthur Osmond-Williams
Merthyr Tydvil	David Alfred Thomas. James Keir Hardie.
Middlesbrough	Joseph Havelock Wilson.
Middlesex—	
Enfield	James Branch.
Tottenham	Percy Alden.
Hornsey	Earl of Ronaldshey.
Harrow	James Gibb.
Ealing	Herbert Nield.
Brentford	Dr. V. H. Rutherford.
Uxbridge	Sir Fred. D. Dixon-Hartland, Bt.

MONMOUTH—	
Northern	Rt. Hon. Reginald McKenna.
Western	Tom Richards.
Southern	Col. John Ivor Caradoc Herbert.
MONMOUTH, &c.	L. Haslam.
MONTGOMERY	David Davies.
MONTGOMERY, &c.	J. D. Rees.
MORPETH	Rt. Hon. Thomas Burt.
NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME	Josiah Clement Wedgwood.
NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE	W. Hudson. T. Cairns.
NEWINGTON—	
Walworth	C. J. O'Donnell.
West	Captain Cecil Wm. Norton.
NORFOLK—	
North-Western	Sir George White.
South-Western	R. Winfrey.
Northern	Sir William Brampton Gurdon.
Eastern	Robert John Price.
Mid	Lord Wodehouse.
Southern	Arthur W. Soames.
NORTHAMPTON—	
Northern	George Nicholls.
Eastern	Sir Francis Allston Channing.
Mid	H. Manfield.
Southern	T. N. A. Grove.
NORTHAMPTON	Herbert W. Paul. Dr. John Greenwood Shipman.
NORTHUMBERLAND—	
Wansbeck	Charles Fenwick.
Tyneside	J. M. Robertson.
Hexham	R. D. Holt.
Berwick-upon-Tweed	Rt. Hon. Sir Edward Grey, Bt.
NORWICH	G. H. Roberts. Louis John Tillett.
NOTTINGHAM—	
Bassetlaw	F. Newnes.
Newark	J. R. Starkey.
Rushcliffe	Rt. Hon. John Edward Ellis.
Mansfield	Arthur B. Markham.
NOTTINGHAM—	
West	James Henry Yoxall.
East	Sir Henry John Stedman Cotton.
South	Arthur Richardson.
OLDHAM	Alfred Emmott. J. A. Bright.
OXFORD—	
Northern or Banbury	Hon. Eustace E. Fiennes.
Mid or Woodstock	E. N. Bennett.
Southern or Henley	Phillip Morell.

OXFORD	Viscount Valentia.
OXFORD UNIVERSITY	Sir William Reynell Anson, Bt. Rt. Hon. John Gilbert Talbot.
PADDINGTON—	
North	L. G. Chiozza Money.
South	Sir T. George Fardell.
PEMBROKE	John Wynford Phillips.
PEMBROKE AND HAVERFORDWEST	O. C. Phillips.
PENRYN AND FALMOUTH	John Barker.
PETERBOROUGH	Granville George Greenwood.
PLYMOUTH	T. W. Dobson. Charles E. Mallet.
PONTEFRACT	Thomas Willans Nussey.
PORTSMOUTH	Thomas Arthur Bramsdon. Sir John Baker.
PRESTON	John Thomas MacPherson. Harold Cox.
RADNOR	Sir Frank Edwards.
READING	Rufus Daniel Isaacs.
ROCHDALE	A. G. C. Harvey.
ROCHESTER	Ernest H. Lamb.
RUTLAND	John Gretton.
ST. GEORGE'S, HANOVER SQUARE	Rt. Hon. Alfred Lyttelton.
ST. HELENS	Thomas Glover.
ST. PANCRAS—	
North	Willoughby Hyett Dickinson.
East	Hugh Cecil Lea.
West	Sir William Job Collins.
South	P. Whitwell Wilson.
SALFORD—	
North	William Pollard Byles.
South	Hilaire J. P. R. Belloc.
West	George William Agnew.
SALISBURY	Sir Edward Priaulx Tennant.
SCARBOROUGH	Walter Russell Rea.
SHEFFIELD—	
Attercliffe	J. Batty Langley.
Brightside	John Tudor Walters.
Central	Col. Sir C. E. H. Vincent, K.C.M.G., C.B.
Hallam	Rt. Hon. Chas. B. Stuart Wortley.
Ecclesall	Samuel Roberts.

SHOREDITCH—	
Hoxton	Hon. Claude George D. Hay.
Haggerston	Sir Randal Cremer.
SHREWSBURY	Sir Clement Lloyd Hill.
SHROPSHIRE—	
Western or Oswestry	W. Clive Bridgeman.
Northern or Newport	Rt. Hon. Col. William Kenyon Slaney.
Mid or Wellington	C. S. Henry.
Southern or Ludlow	Rowland Hunt.
SOMERSET—	
Northern	W. H. B. Hope.
Wells	Thomas Ball Silcock.
Frome	Sir John Emmott Barlow
Eastern	J. W. H. Thompson.
Southern	Sir Edward Strachey, Bt.
Bridgwater	H. G. Montgomery.
Western or Wellington	Rt. Hon. Sir A. F. Acland Hood, Bt
SOUTHAMPTON	Lt.-Col. Ivor Philipps. William Dudley Ward.
SOUTH SHIELDS	Sir William Snowdon Robson.
SOUTHWARK—	
West	Rt. Hon. Richard Knight Causton.
Rotherhithe	Hubert W. Carr-Gomm.
Bermondsey	Dr. George Cooper.
STAFFORD—	
Leek	Robert Pearce.
Burton	Robert F. Ratcliffe.
Western	H. D. McLaren.
North-Western	Arthur Stanley.
Lichfield	Thomas Courtenay T. Warner.
Kingswinford	H. Staveley Hill.
Handsworth	E. C. Meysey-Thompson.
STAFFORD	Charles Edward Shaw.
STALYBRIDGE	J. F. Cheetham.
STOCKPORT	G. J. Wardle. James Duckworth.
STOCKTON	Col. Sir E. H. O. Robert Ropner, Bt
STOKE-UPON-TRENT	John Ward.
STRAND (Westminster)	Hon. W. F. Danvers Smith.
SUFFOLK—	
Northern or Lowestoft	H. W. Beauchamp.
North-Eastern or Eye	Harold Pearson.
North-Western or Stowmarket	George A. Hardy.
South or Sudbury	W. C. Heaton-Armstong.
South-Eastern or Woodbridge	Robert Lacey Everett.

SUNDERLAND	James Stuart. T. Summerbell.
SURREY—	
North Western or Chertsey	F. J. Marnham.
South-Western or Guildford	W. H. Cowan.
South-Eastern or Reigate	H. C. Brodie.
Mid or Epsom	William Keswick.
Kingston	George Cave.
North-Eastern or Wimbledon	Rt. Hon. H. H. Chaplin.
SUSSEX—	
North-Western or Horsham	Earl Winterton
South-Western or Chichester	Lord Edmund Talbot.
Northern or East Grinstead	C. H. Corbett.
Mid or Lewes	Rt. Hon. Sir Hy. Aubrey Fletcher, Bt.
Southern or Eastbourne	Hubert Beaumont.
Eastern or Rye	George Loyd Courthope.
SWANSEA—	
Town	Sir George Newnes, Bt.
District	Sir David Brynmor Jones.
TAUNTON	Sir E. Boyle, Bt., K.C.
TOWER HAMLETS—	
Whitechapel	Stuart Montagu Samuel.
St. George's	W. Wedgwood Benn.
Limehouse	William Pearce.
Mile End	Bertram S. Straus.
Stepney	Leverton Harris.
Bow and Bromley	G. Stopford Brooke.
Poplar	Rt. Hon. Sydney Charles Buxton.
TYNEMOUTH	Herbert J. Craig.
WAKEFIELD	Edward Allen Brotherton.
WALSALL	Major Edward Martin Dunn.
WANDSWORTH	Sir Henry Kimber, Bt.
WARRINGTON	Arthur H. Crosfield.
WARWICK—	
Northern or Tamworth	Sir Philip Albert Muntz, Bt.
North-Eastern or Nuneaton	William Johnson.
South-Western or Stratford on-Avon	Capt. M. K. Smith.
South-Eastern or Rugby	Corrie Grant.
WARWICK AND LEAMINGTON	Thomas Henry Devereux Berridge.
WEDNESBURY	Clarendon Golding Hyde.
WEST BROMWICH	Dr. Alfred Ernest W. Hazel.
WEST HAM—	
North	Charles Fredk. Gurney Masterman.
South	Will Thorne.

Westminster	W. L. Ashmead B. Burdett-Coutts.
Westmoreland—	
Northern or Appleby	Leif Jones.
Southern or Kendal	D. Stewart-Smith.
Whitehaven	W. J. Dalzell Burnyeat.
Wigan	Sir Francis Sharpe Powell, Bt.
Wight, Isle of	Godfrey Baring.
Wilts—	
Northern or Cricklade	Dr. John Massie.
North-Western or Chippenham	Sir John Dickson Poynder, Bt.
Western or Westbury	John Michael Fleetwood Fuller.
Eastern or Devizes	F. N. Rogers.
Southern or Wilton	L. L. Morse.
Winchester	Hon. Guy Victor Baring.
Windsor	James Francis Mason.
Wolverhampton—	
West	T. F. Richards
East	Rt. Hon. Sir H. H. Fowler.
South	Sir Henry Norman.
Woolwich	William Crooks.
Worcester—	
West or Bewdley	Alfred Baldwin.
South or Evesham	Col. Charles Wigram Long.
Mid or Droitwich	C. B. Harmsworth
Northern	John William Wilson.
Eastern	Rt. Hon. J. Austen Chamberlain.
Worcester	———
York, North Riding—	
Thirsk and Malton	Lord Helmsley
Richmond	Francis Dyke Acland.
Cleveland	Herbert Louis Samuel.
Whitby	Hon. Gervase Beckett.
York, East Riding—	
Holderness	Arthur Stanley Wilson.
Buckrose	Luke White.
Howdenshire	Col. Henry Broadley-Harrison-Broadley.
York, West Riding—	
Skipton	W. Clough.
Keighley	John Brigg.
Shipley	Percy Illingworth.
Sowerby	John Sharp Higham.
Elland	Charles Philips Trevelyan.
Morley	Alfred Eddison Hutton.
Normanton	F. Hall.
Colne Valley	Victor Grayson.

York, West Riding—*continued.*	
Holmfirth	Henry Joseph Wilson.
Barnsley	Joseph Walton.
Hallamshire	J. Wadsworth.
Rotherham	Sir Henry William Holland.
Doncaster	Charles Norris Nicholson.
Ripon	H. F. B. Lynch.
Otley	James Hastings Duncan.
Barkston Ash	George Lane-Fox.
Osgoldcross	J. Compton Rickett.
Pudsey	George Whiteley.
Spen Valley	Sir Thomas Palmer Whittaker.
York	Hamar Greenwood. George Denison Faber.

SCOTLAND (72 Members.)

Aberdeen—	
East	James Murray.
West	J. McD. Henderson.
Aberdeen—	
North	Duncan Vernon Pirie.
South	G. B. Esslemont.
Argyll	John Stirling Ainsworth.
Ayr—	
North	Hon. Thomas H. Cochrane.
South	W. P. Beale.
Ayr Burghs	George Younger
Banff	W. Waring.
Berwick	Harold John Tennant.
Bute	Norman Lamont.
Caithness	Robert Leicester Harmsworth.
Clackmannan & Kinross	Eugene Wason.
Dumbarton	J. D. White.
Dumfries	P. A. Molteno.
Dumfries, &c.	J. W. Gulland.
Dundee	Rt. Hon. Edmund Robertson. A. Wilkie.
Edinburgh (Midlothian)	Lord Dalmeny.

Edinburgh—	
East	George McCrae.
West	Sir Lewis McIver, Bt.
Central	Charles E. Price.
South	Arthur Dewar.
Edinburgh and St. Andrews Universities	Sir J. Batty Tuke.
Elgin and Nairn	A. Williamson.
Elgin, Banff, &c.	J. E. Sutherland.
Falkirk, &c.	J. A. Murray Macdonald.
Fife—	
Eastern	Rt. Hon. Herbert H. Asquith
Western	John Deans Hope.
Forfar	Rt. Hon. John Sinclair.
Glasgow—	
Bridgeton	J. W. Cleland.
Camlachie	Alexander Cross.
St. Rollox	T. McKinnon Wood.
Central	A. M. Torrance.
College	H. A. Watt.
Tradeston	A. Cameron Corbett.
Blackfriars and Hutchesontown	J. N. Barnes.
Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities	Sir H. Craik.
Greenock	Halley Stuart.
Haddington	Rt. Hon. Richard B. Haldane.
Hawick, &c.	Rt. Hon. Thomas Shaw.
Inverness	Sir John Alexander Dewar.
Inverness, &c.	J. Annan Bryce.
Kilmarnock, &c.	A. R. Rainy.
Kincardine	John William Crombie.
Kirkcaldy, &c.	James H. Dalziel.
Kirkcudbright	Major G. McMicking.
Lanark—	
Govan	R. Duncan.
Partick	R. Balfour.
North Western	William Mitchell-Thomson.
North-Eastern	Alexander Findlay.
Mid	James Caldwell.
Southern	W. Menzies.
Leith, &c.,	Ronald C. Munro Ferguson.

LINLITHGOW	Alexander Ure.
MONTROSE, &c.	Rt. Hon. John Morley.
ORKNEY & SHETLAND	J. Cathcart Wason.
PAISLEY	John McCallum.
PEEBLES & SELKIRK	Master of Elibank.
PERTH—	
Eastern	Thomas Ryburn Buchanan.
Western	D. C. Erskine.
PERTH	Sir R. Pullar.
RENFREW—	
Eastern	R. Laidlaw.
Western	Sir T. Glen-Coats, Bt.
ROSS & CROMARTIE	James Galloway Weir.
ROXBURGH	Sir John Jardine.
ST. ANDREWS, &c.	Major Anstruther-Gray.
STIRLING	Donald McKenzie Smeaton.
STIRLING, &c.	Rt. Hon. Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman
SUTHERLAND	Alpheus Cleophas Morton.
WICK, &c.	Sir Arthur Bignold.
WIGTON	Lord Dalrymple.

IRELAND (103 Members).

ANTRIM—	
North	R. Glendinning.
Mid	Hon. Rob. Torrens O'Neill.
East	Colonel James McCalmont.
South	Charles Curtis Craig.
ARMAGH—	
North	Wm. Moore.
Mid	John Brownlee Lonsdale.
South	W. McKillop.
BELFAST—	
East	Gustavus Wilhelm Wolff.
South	Thomas Henry Sloan.
West	J. Devlin.
North	George Clark.
CARLOW	

CAVAN—	
West	Vincent Paul Kennedy.
East	Samuel Young.
CLARE—	
East	William H. K. Redmond.
West	J. Halpin.
CORK—	
North	James Christopher Flynn.
North-East	William Abraham.
Mid	Daniel Daniel Sheehan.
East	Capt. A. J. C. Donelan.
West	James Gilhooly.
South	Edward Barry.
South-East	Eugene Crean.
CORK	William O'Brien. Augustine Roche.
DONEGAL—	
North	P. O'Doherty.
West	Hugh A. Law.
East	C. McVeigh.
South	J. G. Swift McNeill.
DOWN—	
North	Thomas Lorimer Corbett.
East	Captain James Craig.
South	Jeremiah MacVeagh.
West	Lord Arthur Hill.
DUBLIN—	
North	John J. Clancy.
South	Rt. Won. Walter H. Long.
DUBLIN—	
College Green	Joseph Patrick Nannetti.
Dublin Harbour	Timothy C. Harrington.
St. Stephen's Green	Lawrence Ambrose Waldron.
St. Patrick's	William Field.
DUBLIN UNIVERSITY	Right Hon. Sir E. H. Carson. Rt. Hon. J. H. M. Campbell.
FERMANAGH—	
North	G. Fetherstonhaugh
South	Jeremiah Jordan.
GALWAY—	
Connemara	William O'Malley.
North	Richard Hazleton.
East	John Roche.
South	William J. Duffy.
GALWAY	S. L. Gwynn.

KERRY—	
North	Michael Joseph Flavin
West	Thomas O'Donnell.
South	John P. Boland.
East	John Murphy.
KILDARE—	
North	John O'Connor.
South	Dennis Kilbride.
KILKENNY—	
North	Michael Meagher.
South	N. J. Murphy.
KILKENNY	Patrick O'Brien.
KING'S CO.—	
Birr...	Michael Reddy.
Tullamore ...	Edmund Haviland Burke.
LEITRIM—	
North	
South	T. Smith.
LIMERICK—	
West	Patrick Joseph O'Shaughnessy.
East	William Lundon.
LIMERICK	Michael Joyce.
LONDONDERRY—	
North	H. T. Barrie.
South	John Gordon.
LONDONDERRY ...	Marquess of Hamilton.
LONGFORD—	
North	James Patrick Farrell.
South	
LOUTH—	
North	Timothy M. Healy.
South	Joseph Nolan.
MAYO—	
North	Conor O'Kelly.
West	Dr. R. Ambrose.
East	John Dillon.
South	John O'Donnell.
MEATH—	
North	Patrick White.
South	David Sheehy.
MONAGHAN—	
North	J. C. R. Lardner
South	J. McKean.
NEWRY ...	J. J. Mooney.

QUEEN'S CO.	
Ossory	William Delany.
Leix	P. A. Meehan.
ROSCOMMON—	
North	James O'Kelly.
South	John P. Hayden.
SLIGO—	
North	P. A. McHugh.
South	John O'Dowd.
TIPPERARY—	
North	Michael Hogan.
Mid	Kendal E. O'Brien.
South	John Cullinan.
East	Thomas Joseph Condon.
TYRONE—	
North	Redmond Barry.
Mid	George Murnaghan.
East	T. M. Kettle.
South	Thomas W. Russell.
WATERFORD—	
West	James John O'Shee.
East	Patrick Joseph Power.
WATERFORD	John E. Redmond.
WESTMEATH—	
North	L. Ginnell.
South	Sir W. Nugent.
WEXFORD—	
North	Sir T. H. Grattan Esmonde.
South	Peter Ffrench.
WICKLOW—	
West	James O'Connor.
East	John Muldoon.

SUMMARY.

	No. of Members	
ENGLAND		
Counties...	234	
Metropolitan Boroughs...	62	
Provincial Cities and Boroughs	164	
		460
WALES		
Counties...	19	
Boroughs	11	
		30
SCOTLAND		
Counties...	39	
Cities and Burghs	31	
		70
IRELAND		
Counties...	85	
Cities and Boroughs	16	
		101
UNIVERSITIES		
England ...	5	
Scotland ...	2	
Ireland ...	2	
		9
Total number of Members		670

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The KING, being seated on the Throne, and the Commons being at the Bar with their Speaker, His Majesty was pleased to make a most gracious Speech to both Houses of Parliament, and then retired 1

SAT FIRST.—The Marquess of Bristol sat first in Parliament after the death of his uncle.

The Lord Clanwilliam (*E. Clanwilliam*) sat first in Parliament after the death of his father.

The Lord Aldenham sat first in Parliament after the death of his father.

The Lord Nunburnholme sat first in Parliament after the death of his father.

The Viscount Torrington sat first in Parliament after the death of his father.

The Lord Saye and Sele sat first in Parliament after the death of his father.

Several Lords took the Oath.

EDMUND ARBUTHNOTT (*Lord Bishop of Manchester*) was (in the usual manner) introduced 4

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REPRESENTATIVE PEERS FOR IRELAND.—Writs and Returns electing the Lord Curzon of Kedleston a Representative Peer for Ireland in the room of the late Lord Kilmaine, deceased, with the certificate of the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland annexed thereto: delivered (on oath), and certificate read.

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EARL OF CLANWILLIAM.—Petition of Arthur Vescy, Earl of Clanwilliam in the Peerage of Ireland, claiming a right to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland; read, and referred to the Lord Chancellor to consider and report thereupon to the House.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS (RECESS).

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the following Papers, having been commanded to be presented to this House by His Majesty, had been so presented on the following dates by delivery to the Clerk of the Parliaments, pursuant to Standing Order No. CXI., viz.—

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

I. Official correspondence relating to the payment of teachers' salaries in Merionethshire.

II. Administrative County of Kent: Endowed Charities (Elementary Education).

III. Special Reports on Educational Subjects—
  1. Volume 18.
  2. Volume 19.
  3. Volume 21.

IV. Special grants in aid of certain local education authorities.

V. General Report on instruction and training of pupil teachers in Wales.

VI. Report of the Board of Education for the year 1906–1907.

VII. Building regulations for secondary schools and pupil teacher centres.

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House adjourned at half-past Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 29TH JANUARY, 1908.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MESSAGE TO ATTEND HIS MAJESTY.—The House went; and having returned, Mr. SPEAKER informed the House, That he had issued, during the Recess, Warrants for New Writs, for Liverpool (Kirkdale Division), in the room of David MacIvor, esquire, deceased; Kingston-upon-Hull, the hon. Charles Henry Wellesley Wilson, called to the House of Peers; Devonshire (Ashburton Division), Harry Trelawney Eve, esquire, K.C., who hath accepted the Office of Judge of the High Court of Justice; Herefordshire (Southern or Ross Division), Lieutenant-Colonel Alan Coulstoun Gardner, deceased; County Carlow, John Hammond, esquire, deceased 80

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Post Office (Foreign and Colonial Parcel Post).—Foreign and Colonial Parcel Post Amendment (No. 11) Warrant; to lie upon the Table 113

Post Office (Foreign and Colonial Parcel Post)—Foreign and Colonial Parcel Post Amendment (No. 12) Warrant; to lie upon the Table 113

Post Office (Foreign and Colonial Parcel Post).—Foreign and Colonial and Colonial Parcel Post Amendment (No. 12) Warrant; to lie upon the table 113

Post Office (Foreign and Colonial Post except Parcels).—Treasury Warrant, as to the Foreign and Colonial Post except Parcels; to lie upon the Table 113

Post Office Telegraphs, Including Telephones.—Account; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 18] 113

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1. Lunacy.—Copy of Report of the number of Visits made, the number of Patients seen.

2. Lunacy.—Copy of Return of all sums received by the Visitors of Lunatics for travelling expenses.

3. Public Trustee (Rules).—The Public Trustee Rules.

4. Shipping Casualties (Rules).—General Rules for formal investigations into Shipping Casualties.

5. Mersey Docks and Harbour Board.—Accounts.

6. Public Records (High Court of Justice).—Second Schedule.

7. Public Records (War Department).—Seventh Schedule 114

NOTICES OF MOTION.

Mr. John Redmond (Waterford) 114
The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Asquith, Fifeshire, E.) 114
The President of the Board of Education (Mr. McKenna, Monmouthshire, N.) 114
The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.) 114
The Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland (Mr. Birrell, Bristol, N.) 114
The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. John Burns, Battersea) 114
The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Lloyd-George, Carnarvon Boroughs) 114
The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dundee) .. 114

KING'S SPEECH.—Mr. SPEAKER reported His Majesty's Speech, and read it to the House.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS IN REPLY).

Mr. Lehmann (Leicestershire, Market Harborough) 116
Mr. Howell Davies (Bristol, S.) 120

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Lehmann*).

Mr. A. J. Balfour (*City of London*) 123
The Chancellor of the Exchequer (*Mr. Asquith, Fifeshire, E.*) 139
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Mr. Arthur Henderson (*Durham, Barnard Castle*) 164
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Mr. Summerbell (*Sunderland*) 182
Mr. R. Duncan (*Lanarkshire, Govan*) 183
Mr. Rees (*Montgomery Boroughs*) 185

Motion made, and Question, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Ramsey Macdonald*)—put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

ADJOURNMENT.—Motion made, and Question, "That this House do now adjourn." —(*Mr. Whiteley*)—put, and agreed to.

Adjourned at twenty-three minutes after nine o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: THURSDAY, 30TH JANUARY, 1908.

BARON CURZON OF KEDLESTON.—Petition of George Nathaniel Curzon, Baron Curzon of Kedleston, in the Peerage of Ireland, claiming a right to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland; read and referred to the Lord Chancellor to consider and report thereupon to the House.

Report made from the Lord Chancellor that the right of George Nathaniel Curzon, Baron Curzon of Kedleston, in the Peerage of Ireland, to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland has been established to the satisfaction of the Lord Chancellor; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

Ordered, That the Report of the Lord Chancellor of the United Kingdom, made to the House of Lords this day, that the right of the Baron Curzon of Kedleston to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland has been established to his satisfaction, be sent to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland, together with a certificate stating that such report has been made, and that the House has ordered it to be sent to the said Clerk of the Crown in Ireland 189

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Crown Jewels Commission (Ireland).—Report of the Vice-regal Commission 189

Board of Agriculture and Fisheries.—Annual Report on the distribution of grants for Agricultural Education and Research in the year 1906–1907 .. 189

Explosives (Explosion at the Factory of Messrs. Kynoch, Limited, Worsboro' Dale, near Barnsley).—Report to the Secretary of State for the Home Department 190

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Agricultural Statistics (Ireland) 190

Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887.—Return of the number of eviction notices filed during the quarter ended 31st December, 1907 190

Treaty Series, No. 3 (1908).—Exchange of notes between the United Kingdom and France, arrangements under Article X., Section 4, of the Convention of 20th October, 1906, respecting the New Hebrides, 29th August, 1907 .. 190

Army (Special Reserve).—Form of attestation to be used for enlisting militia men as special reservists under the Territorial and Reserve Forces Bill .. 190

(Imperial Yeomanry in Great Britain and Ireland).—Training Return, 1907 190

Navy (Estimates).—Navy Estimates for the year 1908–1909.
Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 190

Army (Rules of Procedure, 1907).—New edition of Rules of Procedure for Courts-martial 190

Workmen's Compensation Act, 1906 (Regulations as to Returns from Employers) 190

Factory and Workshop (Particulars of Piece-work Wages) (Brass) .. 191

(Fruit Preserving).—Order made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department presribing conditions to be observed in factories and workshops in which women or young persons are employed 191

Penal Servitude Acts, 1853-1891 (Conditional Licences) 191

Polling Districts (County of Essex) 191

Shop Hours Act, 1904.
I. (County of Lancaster).
II. Closing orders made by the urban district council of Omagh ; the council of the county borough of Londonderry 191

Pharmacy (Ireland) Acts, 1875 and 1890.—Order in Council, dated 24th January, 1908, approving of a regulation made by the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland 192

Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland.—Importation of Horses, Asses, and Mules (Ireland) Order, 1907 ; Importation of Horses, Asses, and Mules (Ireland) Order, 1907, No. 2 192

Winter Assizes (Ireland).—Four Orders in Council, dated 5th November, 1907, for holding winter assizes in Ireland 192

Pawnbrokers (Ireland).—Returns from the City Marshal of Dublin for 1906 192

Intermediate Education (Ireland).—Time table of examinations for 1908 .. 192

General Prisons (Ireland) Act, 1877, and the Prisons (Ireland) Act, 1907.—Order in Council 192

West Highland Railway (Extension from Banavie to Mallaig).—Sixth Annual Report by the Board of Trade 192

Superannuation.—Treasury Minute declaring that Sir R. Hay Drummond-Hay, His Majesty's Consul-General, Beirat, was appointed without a Civil Service certificate 192

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

ADDRESS IN REPLY TO HIS MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.—Order of the Day for the resuming the debate on the Motion for an humble Address to His Majesty, read.

The Marquess of Londonderry 193
Lord Clonbrock 203
The Earl of Donoughmore 206
Lord Castletown 215
Lord Oranmore and Browne 219
Lord Longford 222
Earl Beauchamp 224
Lord Dunboyne 230

Moved, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*The Earl of Leitrim.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed further to consider the suggestions which have from time to time been made for increasing the efficiency of the House of Lords in matters affecting legislation, and to report as to the desirability of adopting them either in their original or in some modified form." (The Lord Rosebery (*E. Rosebery*)); agreed to, and ordered accordingly. Then the following Lords were named of the Committee—

L. Archbishop of Canterbury.
D. Norfolk.
D. Bedford.
D. Devonshire.
D. Northumberland.
M. Lansdowne.
E. Jersey.
E. Lauderdale.
E. Onslow.
E. Cawdor.
E. Camperdown.
E. Lytton.
E. Halsbury.
V. Selby.
V. St. Aldwyn.
L. Clinton.
L. Brodrick (*Viscount Midleton*).
L. Ribblesdale.
L. Rosebery (*E. Rosebery*).
L. Belper.
L. Kenry (*E. Dunraven and Mount Earl*).
L. Newton.
L. Curzon of Kedleston.
L. Courtney of Penwith.
L. Collins.

The Committee to meet on Tuesday next at Three o'clock, and to appoint their own Chairman 233

PUBLIC BILLS.

Moved, "That there be laid before the House a continuation of the Return relating to Public Bills (51) (laid before the House on 6th May last) up to the end of the session of 1907" (*The Earl of Camperdown*); agreed to, and ordered accordingly 233

THE EARL OF ONSLOW.—Appointed *nemine dissentiente* to take the Chair in all Committees of this House for the session.
Committee for Privileges.—Appointed.
Committee for the Journals.—Appointed.
Stoppages in the Streets.—Order to prevent, renewed.
Appeal Committee.—Appointed 233

ADJOURNMENT.

Moved, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*The Marquess of Ripon.*)

The Earl of Donoughmore 234

House adjourned at half-past Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: THURSDAY, 30TH JANUARY, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

Mr. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.—The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, through indisposition, from this day's Sitting.

Whereupon Mr. EMMOTT, the CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS, took the Chair as Deputy Speaker 234

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS.—The CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS reported, That, he had conferred with the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords, and they had determined that the Bills contained in the following List should originate in the House of Lords, viz. :—

Aire and Calder Navigation; Alliance and other Assurance and Insurance Companies; Ammanford Urban District Council Water; Argentine North-Eastern Railway; Audenshaw and Saddleworth Urban District Councils; Barry Railway; Bognor Gas Light and Coke Company; Bristol Corporation; Bristol Docks; Bristol Tramways; Briton Ferry Urban District Council; Camberwell and other Metropolitan Borough Councils (Superannuation); Cardiff Railway; Commercial Union Assurance Company; Croydon and Southern Districts Tramways; Crystal Palace Company; Fine Art and General Insurance Company; Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours; Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway; Great Western Railway; Great Western Railway (Superannuation Scheme); Herne Bay Pier; Highgate Hill Tramways; Huddersfield Water; Interoceanic Railway of Mexico; Keighley Corporation; King's College, London (Transfer); Law Guarantee Trust and Accident, and United Legal Indemnity Insurance Societies; Llanelly and Burry Port Water Board; Llanelly Gas; London and District Electricity Supply; London and Windsor Motor Roads, Tramroads, and Tramways; London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway; London County Council (Tramways and Improvements); London Electric Supply; London Motor Roadways Approach; London (Westminster and Kensington) Electric Supply Companies; Magee Presbyterian College, Londonderry, Malvern Hills; Merthyr Tydfil Corporation; Metropolitan District Railway; Metropolitan Electric Tramways; Monmouthshire County Council; Northern Assurance Company; Norwich Union Fire Insurance Society; Pontypridd Water; Ravensthorpe Urban District Council; Rhymney and Aber Valleys Gas and Water; Rhymney Railway; Rochester Bridge; St. Marylebone Borough Council (Superannuation); Skegness Urban District Council; South Wales Electrical Power Distribution; Stratford-upon-Avon, Towcester, and Midland Junction, Evesham, Redditch, and Stratford-upon-Avon Junction, and East and West Junction Railways (Amalgamation); Swansea Valley Gas; Taff Vale Railway; Thames River Steamboat Service Act (1904) Amendment; Upton Town Hall; Wath-upon-Dearne Urban District Council Gas; West London, Barnes, and Richmond Tramways 234

Upton Town Hall.

Wath upon Dearne Urban District Council Gas.

West London, Barnes, and Richmond Tramways. 234

PETITIONS.

Licensed Premises (Exclusion of Children).—117 Petitions for legislation; to lie on the Table 236

Licensing Acts.—Two Petitions for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table 237

Monastic and Conventional Institutions.—Petition for Government inspection; to lie upon the Table 237

Parliamentary Franchise.—Petition for extension to women; to lie upon the Table 237

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sundays.—40 Petitions for legislation; to lie upon the Table 23

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Explosions (Worsboro' Dale).—Report to the Secretary of State for the Home Department; to lie upon the Table 237

Penal Servitude Acts (Conditional Licence).—Licence to be at large granted to Ada Wheeler; to lie upon the Table 23

Penal Servitude Acts (Conditional Licence).—Licence to be at large granted to Elizabeth Davies; to lie upon the Table 238

Penal Servitude Acts (Conditional Licences).—Licenses to be at large granted to William Wood and Daniel Condron 238

Workmen's Compensation Act, 1906 (Regulations as to returns from Employers).—Regulations dated 15th January, 1908, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department; to lie upon the Table 238

Factory and Workshops Acts (Fruit Preserving).—Order dated 11th September, 1907, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department; to lie upon the Table 238

Factory and Workshop Acts (Particulars of Piece Work Wages), (Brass).—Order dated 23rd September, 1907, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department 238

Shop Hours Act, 1904.—Order made by the Council of the County of Lancaster; to lie upon the Table 239

Polling Districts (County of Surrey).—Order made by the County Council of the County of Surrey; to lie upon the Table 239

Polling Districts (County of East Suffolk).—Order made by the County Council of the County of East Suffolk; to lie upon the Table 239

Polling Districts (County of Essex).—Order made by the County Council of the County of Essex; to lie upon the Table 239

Polling Districts (County of Lancaster).—Order made by the Council of the County of Lancaster; to lie upon the Table 239

Polling Districts (County of Surrey).—Order made by the County Council of the County of Surrey; to lie upon the Table 239

Board of Agriculture and Fisheries (Distribution of Grants).—Annual Report of the Distribution of Grants for Agricultural Education and Research in the year 1906–7, etc.; to lie upon the Table 239

Agricultural Statistics (Ireland).—Tables; to lie upon the Table 240

Crown Jewels Commission (Ireland).—Report of the Vice-regal Commission; to lie upon the Table 240

Pharmacy (Ireland) Acts, 1875 to 1890.—Order in Council; to lie upon the Table 240

Pawnbrokers' Return (Ireland).—Returns from the City Marshal of Dublin; to lie upon the Table 240

Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887 (Eviction Notices).—Return of Eviction Notices filed during the quarter ended 31st December, 1907; to lie upon the Table 240

Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland.—Importation of Horses, Asses, and Mules (Ireland) Order, 1907, Nos. I. and II. [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 240

Winter Assizes (Ireland).—Four Orders in Council; to lie upon the Table 240

General Prisons (Ireland) Act, 1877, and the Prisons (Ireland) Act, 1907.—Order in Council; to lie upon the Table 240

Shop Hours Act, 1904.—Order made by the Urban District Council of Omagh and by the Council of the County Borough of Londonderry; to lie upon the Table 241

Intermediate Education (Ireland).—Time Table of Examinations of the year 1908; to lie upon the Table 241

Army (Special Reserve).—Form of Attestation to be used for enlisting Militiamen as Special Reservists; to lie upon the Table 241

Army (Imperial Yeomanry).—Training Return of Imperial Yeomanry for 1907; to lie upon the Table 241

Army.—(1) New Edition of Rules of Procedure for Courts Martial, containing (2) Rules for Field Punishments [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 240

Treaty Series (No. 3, 1908).—Exchange of Notes between the United Kingdom and France; to lie upon the Table 241

Navy Estimates, 1908–9.—Estimates presented, for the year 1908–9; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 19.] 241

Navy (Statement Explanatory of Estimates).—Statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty explanatory of the Navy Estimates, 1908–9 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 241

Superannuation Act, 1884.—Treasury Minute, declaring that Sir R. Hay Drummond Hay, His Majesty's Consul-General, Beirut, formerly Clerk to the Mission, Tangier, was appointed without a Civil Service Certificate; to lie upon the Table 242

Alderney Mail Service.—Contract, dated the 28th day of September, 1907, between the Postmaster-General and the Alderney Steam Packet Company, Limited 242

Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland).—Account of Receipts and Payments of the Accountant-General of the Supreme Court of Judicature in Ireland 242

West Indian Inter-Colonial Mail Service.—Contract, dated the 29th day of August, 1907, between the Crown Agents for the Colonies and the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company 242

Civil Contingencies Fund, 1906–7.—Accounts of the Civil Contingencies Fund, 1906–7 242

Trade and Navigation.—Accounts relating to Trade and Navigation of the United Kingdom 243

Parliamentary Constituencies (**Electors, etc.**), (**United Kingdom**).—Return showing the total number, the number in each class of Electors on the register now in force; and also showing the population and inhabited houses in each Constituency 243

QUESTION AND ANSWER CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Cattle Maiming in County Birr 243

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Afghanistan 243

The Brussels Sugar Convention 244

Ballot for Bills and Motions.—Ordered, That no Bills, other than Government Bills, be introduced in anticipation of the ballot, and that all Members who desire to ballot, whether for Bills or for Motions, for Tuesday, 4th February, and Tuesday, 11th February, and Wednesday, 5th February, and Wednesday, 12th February, do hand in their names at the Table during the sitting of the House on Wednesday, 29th January, or Thursday, 30th January, and that a copy of such notices be handed in at the latest during the sitting of the House on Friday, 31st January.

That the ballot for the precedence of the said Bills and Motions be taken on Friday, 31st January, at a convenient time and place, to be appointed by Mr. Speaker, and that the presentation of Bills on Monday, 3rd February, be taken immediately after Questions.—(*Secretary Sir Edward Grey*) 246

Business of the House (King's Speech, Motion for an Address).—Ordered, That the Proceedings on the Address, in answer to His Majesty's Speech, shall, until concluded, have precedence of all other Orders of the Day, and of Notices of Motions, at all Sittings for which they are set down.—(*Secretary Sir Edward Grey.*)

King's Speech (Motion for an Address).—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [29th January], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Lehmann.*)

Question again proposed.

Mr. Ramsay Macdonald (*Leicester*) 246
Mr. Curran (*Jarrow*) 254

Amendment proposed—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'and further we desire humbly to express our regret that, in view of the distress arising from lack of employment, Your Majesty's advisers have not seen fit to recommend any legislation dealing with the subject.'"—(*Mr. Ramsay Macdonald.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. Masterman (*West Ham, N.*) 259
The Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board (*Dr. Macnamara, Camberwell, N*) 264

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Mr. Austen Chamberlain (Worcestershire, E.) 273
Mr. F. E. Smith (Liverpool, Walton) 281
Mr. Harold Cox (Preston) 281
Mr. Kettle (Tyrone, E.) 285
Mr. H. J. Tennant (Berwickshire) 287
Mr. Walter Long (Dublin, S.) 290
Mr. Crooks (Woolwich) 293
Mr. Alden (Middlesex, Tottenham) 299
Mr. Brace (Glamorganshire, S.) 305
Mr. Wedgwood (Newcastle-under-Lyme) 308
Mr. J. Ward (Stoke-on-Trent) 310
Mr. Pickersgill (Bethnal Green) 314
Mr. Ridsdale (Brighton) 318
Mr. Snowden (Blackburn) 320
Mr. Chaplin (Surrey, Wimbledon) 328
The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. John Burns, Battersea) 333

Mr. Jesse Collings (Birmingham, Bordesley) rose to move the adjournment of the debate, but

Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."
The House divided :—Ayes, 318 ; Noes, 39. (Division List No. 1.)
Question put accordingly, "That those words be there added."
The House divided :—Ayes, 146 ; Noes, 195. (Division List No. 2).
Main Question again proposed.
And, it being after Eleven of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned.
Debate to be resumed To-morrow.
On the Motion for the adjournment of the House—

Mr. Snowden (Blackburn) 359
The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.) 359
Mr. Grayson, (Yorkshire, W.R., Colne Valley) 360

Adjourned at sixteen minutes after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY, 31st JANUARY, 1908.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

Mr. Speaker's Absence.—The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, whereupon Mr. Emmott, the Chairman of Ways and Means, took the Chair as Deputy Speaker 361

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Private Bills [Lords].—Standing Orders complied with, viz. :—Aire and Calder Navigation ; Ammanford Urban District Council Water ; Argentine North-Eastern Railway ; Audenshaw and Saddleworth Urban District Councils ; Barry Railway ; Bognor Gas Light and Coke Company ; Bristol Corporation ; Bristol Tramways ; Briton Ferry Urban District Council ; Camberwell and other Metropolitan Borough Councils (Superannuation) ; Cardiff Railway ; Commercial Union Assurance Company ; Crystal Palace Company ; Fine Art and General Insurance Company ; Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours ; Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway ; Great Western Railway ; Great Western Railway (Superannuation) Scheme ; Herne Bay Pier ; Highgate Hill Tramways ; Huddersfield Water ; Keighley Corporation ; King's College, London

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(Transfer); Law Guarantee Trust and Accident, and United Legal Indemnity Insurance Societies; Llanelly and Burry Port Water Board; Llanelly Gas; London and District Electricity Supply; London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway; London Electric Supply; London Motor Roadways Approach; London (Westminster and Kensington) Electric Supply Companies; Magee Presbyterian College, Londonderry; Merthyr Tydfil Corporation; Metropolitan District Railway; Metropolitan Electric Tramways; Monmouthshire County Council; Northern Assurance Company; Norwich Union Fire Insurance Society; Pontypridd Water; Ravensthorpe Urban District Council; Rhymney and Aber Valleys Gas and Water; Rhymney Railway; Rochester Bridge; St. Marylebone Borough Council (Superannuation); Skegness Urban District Council; South Wales Electrical Power Distribution; Swansea Valley Gas; Taff Vale Railway; Upton Town Hall; Wath-upon-Dearne Urban District Council Gas.

Standing Orders not complied with, viz.:—Bristol Docks; London County Council (Tramways and Improvements); Malvern Hills; Stratford-upon-Avon, Towcester, and Midland Junction, Evesham, Redditch, and Stratford-upon-Avon Junction, and East and West Junction Railways (Amalgamation); Thames River Steamboat Service Act (1904) Amendment 361

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).—Standing Orders not complied with, viz.:—Bristol Docks [Lords]; London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) [Lords]; Malvern Hills [Lords]; Stratford-upon-Avon, Towcester, and Midland Junction, Evesham, Redditch, and Stratford-upon-Avon Junction, and East and West Junction Railways (Amalgamation) [Lords]; Thames River Steamboat Service Act (1904) Amendment [Lords].

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 363

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).—Cases of the Petitions for the following Bills, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz.:—Dover Graving Docks; Lower Thames (Grays) Dock.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 363

PETITIONS.

Licensed Premises (Exclusion of Children).—95 Petitions for legislation; to lie upon the Table 363

Pack Licences on Pleasure Steamers.—Petition for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table 364

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sundays.—4 Petitions for legislation; to lie upon the Table 364

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Compulsory Native Labour (Colonies).—To be printed. (No. 20.) .. 364

Polling Districts (County of West Suffolk).—To lie upon the Table .. 364

Civil Contingencies Fund, 1906-7.—To lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 21.) 364

Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland).—To lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 22.) 365

Alderney Mail Service.—To lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 23.) 365

West Indian Inter-Colonial Mail Service.—To lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 24.) 365

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County Courts (England) (Fees).—To lie upon the Table 365

Trade and Navigation.—To lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 25.) 365

Paper Laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House.—Bank of England, Accounts of Exchequer Bills and other Government Securities purchased; to be printed. (No. 26.) 365

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Russia and the Brussels Sugar Convention 365

Railway Companies and Conveyance of Goods by Passenger Train 366

Cattle Driving in Ireland 367

Outrages with Firearms in Ireland 367

Exchequer Contributions under the Irish Labourers Act 367

Cattle Driving in Ireland 368

Agrarian Outrages in Ireland 369

Dismissal of Constable Weir, Royal Irish Constabulary 369

Constable Inquiry at Tullow 370

Publication of Report of the Congested Districts Board 371

Royal Irish Constabulary Recruits 372

The Brussels Sugar Convention 372

Cost of Extra Police in Disaffected Districts in Ireland 372

New Writ.—New Writ for the County of Glamorgan (Mid. Division), in the room of Samuel Thomas Evans, esquire, K.C., His Majesty's Solicitor-General.—(*Mr. Whiteley*) 373

Adjournment.

Resolved, That this House, at the rising of the House this day, do adjourn till Monday next.—(*Mr. Whiteley*) 373

New Writ (Borough of Worcester).

Sir A. Acland-Hood (*Somersetshire, Wellington*) 373

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do issue his Warrant to the Clerk of the Crown to make out a new Writ for the electing of a Member to serve in this present Parliament for the Borough of Worcester, in the room of George Henry Williamson, esquire, whose election has been declared to be void."—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood*).

The Attorney-General (*Sir W. Robson, South Shields*) 374

Question put, and agreed to.

King's Speech (Motion for an Address).—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [29th January], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Lehmann.*)

Question again proposed.

Dr. Rutherford (*Middlesex, Brentford*) 375

Sir H. Cotton (*Nottingham, E.*) 390

Amendment proposed—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'But humbly submit that the present condition of affairs in India demands the immediate and serious attention of His Majesty's Government; that the present proposals of the Government of India are inadequate to allay the existing and growing discontent; and that comprehensive measures of reform are imperatively necessary in the direction of giving the people of India control over their own affairs.' "—(*Dr. Rutherford.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. Hart-Davies (*Hackney, N.*) 395
Mr. O'Grady (*Leeds, E.*) 396
Mr. Smeaton (*Stirlingshire*) 402
Mr. Herbert Roberts (*Denbighshire, W.*) 405
The Secretary of State for India (*Mr. Morley, Montrose Burghs*) 407
Sir J. Jardine (*Roxburghshire*) 416
Mr. C. J. O'Donnell (*Newington, Walworth*) 416

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question again proposed.

Mr. J. M. Robertson (*Northumberland, Tyneside*) 418
Mr. Higham (*Yorkshire, W.R., Sowerby*) 422

Amendment proposed—

"At end to add the words, 'But we regret that, while views favourable to constitutional reform in Egypt have been expressed by the British Consul-General there, your Majesty's Ministers have not enjoined upon him the duty of granting the respectful demand of the General Assembly that former forecasts of such reform by your Majesty's representatives should now be fulfilled.' "—(*Mr. J. M. Robertson.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*Sir Edward Grey, Northumberland, Berwick*) 428
Mr. Morton (*Sutherland*) 430

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question again proposed.

Motion made and Question, "That the debate be now adjourned,"—(*Sir E. Carson,*)—put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

Whereupon, Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to Standing Order No. 3.

Adjourned at twenty minutes before Five o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS: MONDAY, 3RD FEBRUARY, 1908.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Aire and Calder Navigation; Ammanford Urban District Council Water; Argentine North Eastern Railway; Audenshaw and Saddleworth Urban District Councils; Barry Railway; Belfast Corporation; Blackburn Corporation; Blaydon and Ryton Water (Transfer); Bognor Gas Light and Coke Company; Bristol Corporation; Bristol Tramways; Briton

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Ferry Urban District Council; Bromley and Grays Gas; Burnley Corporation; Bury and District Joint Water Board; Camberwell and other Metropolitan Borough Councils (Superannuation); Cardiff Railway; Cheshire Lines Committee; City of Glasgow. (Substituted Bill); Commercial Union Assurance Company; Conway and Colwyn Bay Joint Water Board; Criccieth Water and Improvement; Crystal Palace Company; Dartford Gas; Derby Gas; Doncaster Corporation; Draycott Gas; Dublin and Central Ireland Electric Power; Dublin Corporation; Dublin Corporation (Various Powers); Dublin and South Eastern Railway; Dundalk Urban District Council; Finchley Urban District Council; Fine Art and General Insurance Company; Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours; Garw and Ogmore Gas; Glyncorrwg Urban District Council; Gosport Gas; Great Eastern Railway (General Powers); Great Eastern Railway (Steamboats); Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway; Great Western Railway; Great Western Railway (Superannuation); Greystones Gas; Harwich Docks; Hastings Harbour; Herne Bay Pier Company; Highgate Hill Tramways; Holderness Water; Huddersfield Waterworks; Hull and Barnsley Railway; Humber Commercial Railway and Dock; Keighley Corporation; King's College, London (Transfer); Kingston-upon-Hull Corporation; Knott End Railway; Law Guarantee Trust and Accident and United Legal Indemnity Insurance Societies; Leeds Corporation; Leicester Corporation; Lincoln Corporation; Liverpool Corporation (General Powers); Liverpool Corporation (Streets and Buildings) Llanelly Gas; Llanelly and Burry Port Water Board; London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway; London County Council (General Powers); London and District Electricity Supply; London Electric Supply; London Motor Roadways Approach; London Port and Docks; London (Westminster and Kensington) Electric Supply Companies; Louth and East Coast Railway (Transfer); Macclesfield and District Tramways (Abandonment); Madras Railway Company (Purchase); Magee Presbyterian College, Londonderry; Manchester Corporation; Margate Corporation; Merthyr Tydfil Corporation; Metropolitan District Railway; Monmouthshire County Council; Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway; North Eastern Railway; North East London Railway; Northern Assurance Company; Norwich Union Fire Insurance Company; Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways; Padiham Urban District Council; Pontypridd Water; Ravensthorpe Urban District Council; Rhymney and Aber Valleys Gas and Water; Rhymney Railway; Rochdale Corporation; Rochester Bridge; St. Marylebone Borough Council (Superannuation); Seaham Harbour Dock; Skegness Urban District Council; Sligo and Arigna Railway; Slough Urban District Water; South Wales Electrical Power Distribution; South West Suburban Water; Southwell District Gas; Stockport Corporation; Swansea Valley Gas; Swinton and Mexbrough Gas; Taff Vale Railway; Thames Conservancy; Upton Town Hall; Wath-upon-Dearne Urban District Council Gas; West Bridgford Urban District Water; West Riding County Council; Widnes Corporation; Wolverhampton Corporation.

Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills not complied with:—Bristol Docks; Dover Graving Docks; London County Council (Tramways and Improvements); Lower Thames (Grays) Dock; Malvern Hills; Stratford-upon-Avon; Towcester, and Midland Junction, Evesham, Redditch, and Stratford-upon-Avon Junction, and East and West Junction Railways (Amalgamation); Thames River Steamboat Service Act, 1904 (Amendment).

The same were ordered to lie on the Table 433

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Transvaal.—Correspondence relating to Asiatics in the Transvaal 436

Board of Education.—List of evening schools in England and Wales 436

Evictions (Ireland).—Return of evictions in Ireland 436

Irish Land Commission.—Return of advances made under the Irish Land Act 436

Commercial, No. 1 (1908).—Adhesion of Russia to the Brussels Sugar Convention.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table 436

County Courts (England) (Fees).—Treasury Order, regulating fees 437

Local Government Board (Ireland)—The Poor Law Relief (Ireland) (House of Commons Return) Order, 1907 437

Penal Servitude Acts, 1853 to 1891 (Conditional Licence) 437

Bank of England.—Account of the amount of all Exchequer Bills and other Government securities which have been purchased by the Governor and Company of the Bank of England 437

Ottawa Mint.—Treasury Minute, dated 25th January 1908, directing that the accounts of the expenditure out of the Ottawa Mint annuity be examined and audited by the Comptroller and Auditor-General 437

Imperial Ottoman Guaranteed Loan of 1855.—Account for the year ended 31st December 1907 437

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

THE ASSASSINATIONS IN LISBON.

The Lord Privy Seal (The Marquess of Ripon) 437

Fatal Accidents (Damages) Bill [H.L.].—Read 1ª; to be printed, and to be read 2ª on Tuesday, the 11th instant. (No. 3) 438

ADDRESS IN REPLY TO HIS MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.—Order of the day for resuming the debate on the Motion for an humble Address to His Majesty, read.

The Earl of Leitrim 438
Lord Denman 442
The Earl of Dudley 446
Lord Ashbourne 454
The Lord Chancellor (Lord Loreburn) 461
Viscount Midleton 466
The Lord President of the Council (The Earl of Crewe) 471

On Question, the said Address agreed to, *nemine dissentiente*, and ordered to be presented to His Majesty by the Lords with White Staves.

House adjourned at five minutes before Eight o'clock, till to-morrow half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: MONDAY, 3RD FEBRUARY, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Belfast Corporation Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 481

Blackburn Corporation Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 481

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Blaydon and Ryton Water (Transfer) Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills .. 481

Bromley and Crays Gas Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 481

Burnley Corporation Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 481

Bury and District Joint Water Board Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 482

Cheshire Lines Committee Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 482

City of Glasgow Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 482

Conway and Colwyn Bay Joint Water Board Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 482

Criccieth Water Improvement Bill.—Presented and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 482

Dartford Gas Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 483

Derby Gas Bill.—Presented and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Draycott Gas Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 483

Dublin and Central Ireland Electric Power Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 483

Dublin and South Eastern Railway Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 483

Dublin Corporation Bill.—Presented and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 483

Dublin Corporation (Various Powers) Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 483

Dundalk Urban District Council Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 483

Finchley Urban District Council Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 484

Garw and Ogmore Gas Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bill 484

Glyn Corrwg Urban District Council Bill.—Presented, and read the first time and ordered to be read a second time 484

Gosport Gas Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 484

Great Eastern Railway (General Powers) Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills .. 484

Great Eastern Railway (Steamboats) Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 485

Greystones Gas Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 485

Harwich Docks Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 485

Hastings Harbour Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 485

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Holderness Water Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 485

Hull and Barnsley Railway Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 485

Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills .. 486

Knott End Railway Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 486

Leeds Corporation Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 486

Leicester Corporation Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 486

Lincoln Corporation Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 487

Liverpool Corporation (General Powers) Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 487

Liverpool Corporation (Streets and Buildings) Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 487

London County Council (General Powers) Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 487

London Port and Docks Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 488

Louth and East Coast Railway (Transfer) Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 488

Macclesfield and District Tramways (Abandonment) Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 488

Madras Railway Company (Purchase) Bill.—Presented and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 488

Manchester Corporation Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 488

Margate Corporation Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 488

Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 489

North-East London Railway Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 489

North-Eastern Railway Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 489

Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 489

Padiham Urban District Council Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 489

Rochdale Corporation Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 490

Seaham Harbour Dock Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 491

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Sligo and Arigna Railway Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 491

Slough Urban District Water Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 491

Southwell District Gas Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 491

South-west Suburban Water Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 491

Stockport Corporation Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 491

Swinton and Mexborough Gas Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 492

Thames Conservancy Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 492

West Bridgford Urban District Council Water Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 492

West Riding County Council Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 492

Widnes Corporation Bill.—Presented, and read a first time; and ordered to be read a second time 492

Wolverhampton Corporation Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 492

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Licensing Acts.—Petition for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table .. 492

Parliamentary Franchise.—Two Petitions; to lie upon the Table 492

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday.—Four petitions for legislation; to lie upon the Table 492

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Penal Servitude Acts (Conditional Licence).—To lie upon the Table .. 492

Board of Education.—List of Evening Schools; to lie upon the Table .. 493

Evictions (Ireland).—Return of Evictions in Ireland; to lie upon the Table .. 493

Irish Land Commission.—Return of Advances made under The Irish Land Act, 1903; to lie upon the Table 493

Local Government Board (Ireland).—Poor Law Relief (Ireland) (House of Commons Return); to lie upon the Table 493

Ottawa Mint.—Treasury Minute; to lie upon the Table 493

Imperial Ottoman Guaranteed Loan of 1855.—Account for the year 1907; to lie upon the Table 493

Sugar Convention (Commercial No. 1, 1908).—Correspondence respecting the adhesion of Russia to the Brussels Sugar Convention; to lie upon the Table 493

Transvaal.—Correspondence relating to Legislation affecting Asiatics in the Transvaal; to lie upon the Table 494

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Irish Police Returns 537
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NEW BILLS.

Ecclesiastical Disorders Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 14th February, and to be printed. [Bill 1] 540
Sweated Industries Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 21st February, and to be printed. [Bill 2] 540
Women's Enfranchisement Bill—To be read a second time upon Friday, 28th February, and to be printed. [Bill 3] 541
Education (Local Authorities) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 6th March, and to be printed. [Bill 4] 541
Unemployed Workmen Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 13th March, and to be printed. [Bill 5] 541
Housing of the Working Classes (Ireland) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 20th March, and to be printed. [Bill 6] 541
Registration of Clubs (Ireland) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 27th March, and to be printed. [Bill 7] 542
Poor Law (Ireland Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 3rd April, and to be printed. [Bill 8] 542
Malicious Injuries (Ireland) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 10th April, and to be printed. [Bill 9] 542

Shops Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 1st May, and to be printed. [Bill 10] 542

Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act (1887) Repeal Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 8th May, and to be printed. [Bill 11] 542

House Letting (Scotland) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 15th May, and to be printed. [Bill 12] 542

Elections and Registration (London) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 13] 543

Liquor Traffic (Local Option) (Scotland) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 22nd May, and to be printed. [Bill 14] 543

Public Rights of Way Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 29th May, and to be printed. [Bill 15] 543

Coal Mines (Eight Hours) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 5th June, and to be printed. [Bill 16] 543

Town Tenants (Ireland) Act (1907) Amendment Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 20th March, and to be printed. [Bill 17] 544

Parliamentary Elections (Disqualification Removal) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 27th March, and to be printed. [Bill 18] 544

Education (Provision of Meals) (Scotland) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 19] 544

Coal Mines (Checkweighers) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 29th May, and to be printed. [Bill 20] 544

Access to Mountains Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 15th May, and to be printed. [Bill 21] 544

Police Superannuation (Scotland) Bils.—To be read a second time upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 22] 544

Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 15th May, and to be printed. [Bill 23] 545

Open Spaces (Scotland) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 24] 545

Merchandise Marks Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 25] 545

Exportation of Old Horses Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 26] 545

Franchise and Removal of Women's Disabilities Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 28th February, and to be printed. [Bill 27] .. 545

Licensed Premises (Election Days) Closing Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 14th February, and to be printed. [Bill 28] 546

Post Office Savings Bank Bill.—To be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 29] 546

Access to Mountains (Scotland) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 29th May, and to be printed. [Bill 30] 546

Elementary Education (School Attendance) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 6th March, and to be printed. [Bill 31] 546

Copyhold Enfranchisement Bill.—To be read a second time upon Tuesday, 5th May, and to be printed. [Bill 32] 546

Local Government Qualification (England and Wales) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 10th April, and to be printed. [Bill 33] .. 546

King's Speech (Motion for an Address).—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [29th January], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth :—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament." —(*Mr. Lehmann.*)

Question again proposed.

Mr. Walter Long (*Dublin, S.*) 547
Mr. Lonsdale (*Armagh, Mid.*) 567

Amendment proposed—

"At the end of the Question to add the words, 'But humbly express our regret that Your Majesty's advisers have failed to refer to the increase of agrarian crime and disorder in Ireland, or to give any assurance as to the adoption of measures for the better protection of the lives and properties of Your Majesty's subjects, and for the repression of lawlessness and intimidation in that part of Your Majesty's Dominions.' "—(*Mr. Long.*)

Question proposed, "That the words be there added."

The Chief Secretary for Ireland (*Mr. Birrell, Bristol, N.*) 575
Mr. Butcher (*Cambridge University*) 596
Captain Craig (*Down, E.*) 602
Mr. Staveley-Hill (*Staffordshire, Kingswinford*) 607
Mr. T. L. Corbett (*Down, N.*) 609
Mr. Fetherstonhaugh (*Fermanagh, N.*) 612
Mr. Gordon (*Londonderry, S.*) 617
Mr. William O'Brien (*Cork*) 626
Mr. Guinness (*Bury St. Edmunds*) 633
Mr. Belloc (*Salford, S.*) 638
Mr. Chaplin (*Surrey, Wimbledon*) 642

And, it being Eleven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

Adjourned at Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: TUESDAY, 4TH FEBRUARY, 1908.

Earl of Clanwilliam.—Report made from the Lord Chancellor that the right of Arthur Vesey, Earl of Clanwilliam in the Peerage of Ireland, to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland has been established to the satisfaction of the Lord Chancellor; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 649

Fairfax Peerage.—Petition of Albert Kirby Fairfax, claiming to be Lord Fairfax of Cameron in the Peerage of Scotland; that His Majesty will be graciously pleased to cause his right to the title and dignity of Lord Fairfax of Cameron, to be declared and established; together with His Majesty's reference thereof to this House. Presented (by Command), and referred to the Committee of Privileges to consider and report 649

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Hurly's Divorce Bill [H.L.].—Read 1^a; and to be read 2^a on Tuesday the 31st day of March next. The usual orders made 649

Hurly's Divorce Bill [H.L.].—Petition of Honoria Hurly that the depositions of Ella Morrision, Estelle Hamilton, Ada Norris, and Thomas Harold Mortimer Green may be received in evidence on the Second Reading of the Bill; and that a duly attested copy of the Bill and the Order for the Second Reading thereof, and the usual Orders of this House may be transmitted by registered letter to Rodway Charles John Swinhoe, Solicitor, of Mandalay, Upper Burma, and that the attendance of the said Rodway Charles John Swinhoe before this House to prove personal service of the Bill and Orders be dispensed with, and that an affidavit of the said Rodway Charles John Swinhoe, of such personal service sworn before the Legal Commissioner or a Justice of the Peace for administering oaths be deemed good and sufficient proof of such service. Presented and ordered to be taken into consideration on Friday next 649

Ammanford Urban District Council Water Bill [H.L.]; Audenshaw and Saddleworth Urban District Councils Bill [H.L.]; Bristol Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Briton Ferry Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Camberwell and other Metropolitan Borough Councils (Superannuation) Bill [H.L.]; Herne Bay Pier Bill [H.L.]; Huddersfield Water Bill [H.L.]; Keighley Corporation Bill [H.L.]; King's College, London (Transfer) Bill [H.L.]; London and District Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.]; London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill [H.L.]; Magee Presbyterian College (Londonderry) Bill [H.L.]; Malvern Hills Bill [H.L.]; Merthyr Tydfil Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Monmouthshire County Council Bill [H.L.]; Ravensthorpe Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Skegness Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Swansea Valley Gas Bill [H.L.]; Thames River Steamboat Service Act (1904) Amendment Bill [H.L.]; Upton Town Hall Bill [H.L.]; Wath-upon-Dearne Urban District Council Gas Bill [H.L.].—Presented, and read 1ª. 650

Barry Railway Bill [H.L.]; Bognor Gas Light and Coke Company Bill [H.L.]; Commercial Union Assurance Company Bill [H.L.]; Llanelly Gas Bill [H.L.]; London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Bill [H.L.]; Northern Assurance Company Bill [H.L.]; Norwich Union Fire Insurance Society Bill [H.L.]; Pontypridd Water Bill [H.L.]; Rhymney and Aber Valleys Gas and Water Bill [H.L.]; Stratford-upon-Avon, Towcester, and Midland Junction, Evesham, Redditch, and Stratford-upon-Avon Junction, and East and West Junction Railways (Amalgamation) Bill [H.L.]—Presented; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners 650

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Education (Scotland).—Minute of the Committee of Council on Education in Scotland 650

Lighthouse Administration (Royal Commission).—Report of the Royal Commission.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

THE LISBON MURDERS.—

The Lord Privy Seal (*The Marquess of Ripon*) 651

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty to convey to His Majesty the expression of the indignation and deep concern with which this House has learned the assassination of His Majesty's ancient ally and friend, His Majesty the King of Portugal and the Algarves, and of His Royal Highness the Duke of Braganza; and to pray His Majesty that he will be graciously pleased to express to His Majesty the present King on the part of this House their abhorrence of the crime, and their sympathy with the Royal Family of Portugal and with the people of that country."—*The Marquess of Ripon.*

The Marquess of Lansdowne 652

On Question, Motion agreed to *nemine dissentiente.* The said Address ordered to be presented to His Majesty by the Lords with White Staves.

BRITISH INDIANS IN THE TRANSVAAL.

Lord Ampthill 653

Moved, for Papers relating to the treatment of British Indians in the Transvaal.—(*Lord Ampthill.*)

Earl Roberts 665
Lord Curzon of Kedleston 667
The Secretary of State for the Colonies (*The Earl of Elgin*) 674
The Marquess of Lansdowne 679
The Marquess of Ripon 684
Lord Ampthill 687

Motion, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 4TH FEBRUARY, 1908.

The House met at quarter before Three of the Clock.

NEW WRIT.—New Writ for the Borough of Leeds (South Division), in the room of Sir John Lawson Walton, K.C., deceased.—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

STANDING ORDERS (PRIVATE BUSINESS).

The Chairman of Ways and Means (*Mr. Emmott, Oldham*) 688

Standing Order 98 was read and amended, in line 2, by leaving out from the first word " of," to the word " Members," in line 3, and by inserting the word " Eleven," instead thereof.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

POLICE AND SANITARY COMMITTEE.—Ordered, That the Committee of Selection do nominate a Committee, not exceeding Twelve Members, to be called the Police and Sanitary Committee, to whom shall be committed all Private Bills promoted by municipal and other local authorities by which it is proposed to create powers relating to Police or Sanitary Regulations in conflict with, deviation from, or excess of the provisions of the general Law.

Ordered, That Standing Orders 150 and 173a apply to all such Bills.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, Papers, and records.

Ordered, That Four be the quorum of the Committee.

Ordered, That if the Committee shall report to the Committee of Selection that any Clauses of any Bill referred to them (other than Clauses containing police and sanitary regulations) are such as having regard to the terms of reference it is not in their opinion necessary or advisable for them to deal with, the Committee of Selection shall thereupon refer the Bill to a Select Committee, who shall consider those clauses and so much of the Preamble of the Bill as relates thereto, and shall determine the expenditure (if any) to be authorised in respect of the parts of the Bill referred to them.

That the Committee shall deal with the remaining Clauses of such Bill, and so much of the Preamble as relates thereto, and shall determine the period and mode of repayment of any money authorised by the Select Committee to be borrowed and shall report the whole Bill to the House, stating in their Report what parts of the Bill have been considered by each Committee.

Ordered, That the Committee have power, if they so determine, to sit as two Committees, and in that event to apportion the Bills referred to the Committee between the two Committees, each of which shall have the full powers of, and be subject to the instructions which apply to, the undivided Committee, and that Four be the quorum of each of the two Committees.—(*Mr. Herbert Samuel*) 689

PETITIONS.

Land Values (Assessment and Rating).—Petition for legislation; to lie upon the Table 689

Licensed Premises (Exclusion of Children).—58 Petitions for legislation; to lie upon the Table 689

Licensing Acts.—Petition for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table .. 691

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday.—19 Petitions for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Civil Services and Revenue Departments (Supplementary Estimates, 1907-8).—To lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 27.] .. 691

Army (Supplementary) Estimate, 1907-8.—To lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 28] 691

Lighthouse Administration (Royal Commission).—Report of the Royal Commission. Report [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 691

Education (Scotland).—Minute of the Committee of Council on Education in Scotland, dated 4th February, 1908, providing for special grants-in-aid of certain School Boards in Scotland [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

Paper Laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House.—Church Temporalities (Ireland). Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General upon the Account of the Irish Land Commission in respect of Church Temporalities in Ireland for the year ended 31st March, 1907 [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 29.]

Brewers' Licences.— 692

Telegraph (Construction Bill).—Memorandum in reference to 693

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Income Tax Returns—Employers' Forms 694

Punishment for Outrage at Monastir 694

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The Strength of the Militia 699

The Denshawai Affair—Release of Prisoners 699

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Postage Rates to Morocco 700

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Land for Small Holdings at Abingdon 701

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New Member Sworn.—Percy Archer Clive, esquire, for the County of Hereford (Southern or Ross Division).

NEW BILLS.

Coroners' Inquests (Railway Fatalities) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 8th May, and to be printed. [Bill 34] 72

Telegraph (Construction) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 35] 729

Scottish Land Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 21st February, and to be printed. [Bill 36] 730

Feus and Building Leases (Scotland) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 14th February, and to be printed. [Bill 37] 730

Local Government (Transfer of Powers of Standing Joint Committees) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 1st May, and to rinted. [Bill 38] 730

Coroners' Inquests Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 3rd April, and to be printed. [Bill 39] 730

Ballot Act (1872) Amendment Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 24th April, and to be printed. [Bill 40] 730

Police Superannuation Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 41] 731

Infant Life Protection Bill.—To be read a second time upon Tuesday, 10th March, and to be printed. [Bill 42] 731

Daylight Saving Bill.—To be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 43] 731

THE LISBON MURDERS.—RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY.

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 731
Mr. Akers Douglas (*Kent, St. Augustine's*) 733

Resolved, *Nemine Contradicente*, That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty to convey to His Majesty the expression of the indignation and deep concern with which this House has learned the assassination of His Majesty's ancient ally and friend His Majesty the King of Portugal and the Algarves, and of His Royal Highness the Duke of Braganza; and to pray His Majesty that he will be graciously pleased to express to His Majesty the present King, on the part of this House, his faithful Commons, their abhorrence of the crime and their sympathy with the Royal Family of Portugal and with the people of that country.—(*Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.*)

To be presented by Privy Councillors and Members of His Majesty's Household.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment [3rd February] to Main Question [29th January],

"That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign*,

"We, Your Kajesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament, assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Lehmann.*)

Which Amendment was—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'But humbly express our regret that Your Majesty's advisers have failed to refer to the increase of agrarian crime and disorder in Ireland, or to give any

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assurance as to the adoption of measures for the better protection of the lives and properties of Your Majesty's subjects, and for the repression of lawlessness and intimidation in that part of Your Majesty's Dominions.' "—(*Mr. Long.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. Chaplin (*Surrey, Wimbledon*) 734
Mr. T. P. O'Connor (*Liverpool, Scotland*) 745
Lord R. Cecil (*Marylebone, E.*) 756
The Solicitor-General for Ireland (*Mr. Redmond Barry, Tyrone, N.*) 763
Mr. Lambton (*Durham, S.E.*) 775
Mr. J. Devlin (*Belfast, W.*) 778
Viscount Castlereagh (*Maidstone*) 785
Mr. Power (*Waterford, E.*) 790
Mr. Charles Craig (*Antrim, S.*) 794
Mr. Kettle (*Tyrone, E.*) 805
Sir E. Carson (*Dublin University*) 811
The Attorney-General for Ireland (*Mr. Cherry, Liverpool Exchange*) 822

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 115 ; Noes, 414. (Division List No. 3.)

Main Question again proposed.

And, it being after Eleven of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

Adjourned at twelve minutes after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: WEDNESDAY, 5TH FEBRUARY, 1908.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Bristol Docks Bill [H.L.]; Llanelly and Burry Port Water Board Bill [H.L.].—Presented; and read 1^{a}. 833

Aure and Calder Navigation Bill [H.L.]; Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.]; Law Guarantee Trust and Accident and United Legal Indemnity Insurance Societies Bill [H.L.]; Rochester Bridge Bill [H.L.]; South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Bill [H.L.].—Presented; read 1^{a}; and referred to the Examiners 833

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, and notice of Accidents Act, 1906.—Preliminary tables of cases of industrial poisoning, etc. 833

Colonies—Annual—Southern Nigeria.
Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 833

Merchant Shipping Act, 1894.—Orders in Council 833

Naval and Marine Pay and Pensions Act, 1865.—Orders in Council .. 833

Church Temporalities (Ireland).—Accounts of the Irish Land Commission in respect of Church Temporalities in Ireland 834

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

Universities of Oxford and Cambridge Act, 1877.—Statute money by the Governing body of Christ Church, Oxford. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. [No. 4] 834

Bank of England.—Applications made to the Bank of England, for advances to Government, and ordered to lie on the Table.

THE TREATMENT OF IMPRISONED WOMEN SUFFRAGISTS.

Earl Russell 834
Earl Beauchamp 838

FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE.

On the Motion for the Adjournment of the House—

The Earl of Onslow 838
The President of the Board of Agriculture (Earl Carrington) 839

House adjourned at quarter before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 5TH FEBRUARY, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

NEW WRIT.—New Writ for the County of Leitrim (North Leitrim), in the room of Charles Joseph Dolan, esquire (Manor of Northstead.)—(*Captain Donelan*) 839

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Doncaster Corporation Bill.—Presented, and read the first time, and ordered to be read a second time 840

PETITIONS.

Margate Corporation Bill.—Petition for additional Provision; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Licensed Premises (Exclusion of Children).—41 Petitions for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

Licensing Acts.—Petitions for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table.

Old-Age Pensions.—Petition for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday.—18 Petitions for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, and Notice of Accidents Act, 1906.—Tables of cases of Industrial Poisoning, etc., to lie upon the Table 841

Telegraph Construction Bill.—Return relative thereto; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 30] 841

Universities of Oxford and Cambridge Act, 1877 (Oxford).—Statute made by the Governing Body of Christ Church, Oxford; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 31] 841

Merchant Shipping Act, 1894.—Copies presented, of Orders in Council; to lie upon the Table 841

Naval and Marine Pay and Pensions Act, 1865.—Copies presented, of Orders in Council; to lie upon the Table 841

Colonial Reports (Annual).—Southern Nigeria; to lie upon the Table .. 842

National Physical Laboratory.—Report of the Committee; to lie upon the Table 842

Brewers' Licences.—Return relative thereto; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 32] 842

Greek Loan.—Account to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 33] .. 842

Paper Laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House.—Bank of England Applications to the Bank of England for advances to Government; to be printed. [No. 34] 842

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Incorrigible Vagrants .. 862
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Newton Abbot Disturbances .. 866
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Mr. E. T. McDermott, J.P. .. 878
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Doorus Shooting Outrage .. 880
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The Government and the Lords .. 881

NEW BILLS.

Valuation (Ireland) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 27th March, and to be printed. [Bill 44] .. 881

Waste Lands (Ireland) Improvement Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 24th April, and to be printed. [Bill 45] .. 882

Foreign Trawlers Regulation Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 10th April, and to be printed. [Bill 46] .. 882

Law of Distress Amendment Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 14th February, and to be printed. [Bill 47] .. 882

Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 14th February, and to be printed. [Bill 48] .. 882

Civil Bill Courts (Dublin) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 6th March, and to be printed. [Bill 49] .. 882

Ballot Act (1872) Amendment (No. 2) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 3rd April, and to be printed. [Bill 50] .. 883

Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 51] .. 883

King's Speech (Motion for an Address).—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [29th January], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Lehmann.*)

Question again proposed.

Mr. J. M. MacDonald (Falkirk Burghs) 883
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs) 884
Lord R. Cecil (Marylebone, E.) 884
Sir Philip Magnus (London University) 899

Amendment proposed—

"To the end of the Question to add the words 'But humbly express our regret that the recent action of the Board of Education has not been in accordance with the traditional principles of administration in this country.' "—(*Lord Robert Cecil.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. Herbert Roberts (Denbighshire, W.) 904
The President of the Board of Education (Mr. McKenna, Monmouthshire, N.) 908
Sir William Anson (Oxford University) 919
Mr. Acland (Yorkshire, Richmond) 927
Sir Francis Powell (Wigan) 929
Mr. Adkins (Lancashire, Middleton) 933
Mr. Lyttelton (St. George's, Hanover Square) 936
Mr. Cave (Surrey, Kingston) 944
Mr. Butcher (Cambridge University) 945
Mr. Bridgeman (Shropshire, Oswestry) 949
Mr. Perks (Lincolnshire, Louth) 953
Mr. Boules (Lambeth, Norwood) 954
Lord Balcarres (Lancashire, Chorley) 962
Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.) 966
Lord Edmund Talbot (Sussex, Chichester) 971
Mr. Chaplin (Surrey, Wimbledon) 972
Mr. Evelyn Cecil (Aston Manor) 974
Mr. Rawlinson (Cambridge University) 978
The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education (Mr. Lough, Islington, W.) 982

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 79 ; Noes, 272. (Division List No. 4.)

Main Question again proposed.

Sir William Holland (Yorkshire, W.R., Rotherham) 991

And, it being Eleven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

Adjourned at two minutes after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: THURSDAY, 6TH FEBRUARY, 1908.

HIS MAJESTY THE LATE KING OF PORTUGAL.—The King's answer to the Address of Tuesday last, reported by the Lord Steward (*Earl Beauchamp*) 997

ADDRESS.—The King's answer to the Address of Monday last reported by the Lord Steward (*Earl Beauchamp*) 997

EARL OF CLANWILLIAM.—Ordered, That the Report of the Lord Chancellor of the United Kingdom, made to the House of Lords on Tuesday last that the right of the Earl of Clanwilliam to vote at the elections of Representative

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Peers for Ireland has been established to his satisfaction, be sent to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland, together with a certificate stating that such Report has been made, and that the House has ordered it to be sent to the said Clerk of the Crown in Ireland 997

ROLL OF THE LORDS.—The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had prepared and laid it on the Table. The same was ordered to be printed. (No. 5.) 997

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Bristol Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Crystal Palace Company Bill [H.L.]; Fine Art and General Insurance Company Bill [H.L.]; Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Bill [H.L.]; Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway Bill [H.L.]; Great Western Railway Bill [H.L.]; Great Western Railway (Superannuation Scheme) Bill [H.L.]; Highgate Hill Tramways Bill [H.L.]; London Electric Supply Bill [H.L.]; London Motor Roadways Approach Bill [H.L.]; London (Westminster and Kensington) Electric Supply Companies Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan District Railway Bill [H.L.]; Rhymney Railway Bill [H.L.]; Taff Vale Railway Bill [H.L.].—Presented; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners 997

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill [H.L.].—Petition for additional provision; of the London County Council, under their Common Seal, together with the proposed clause and Amendment annexed thereto.—Read, and referred to the Examiners 998

St. Marylebone Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [H.L.].—Presented, and read 1a 998

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

National Physical Laboratory.—Report of the Committee; Minutes of Evidence; with appendices and index.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 998

Greek Loan of 1832.—Account for 1907 998

Duchy of Cornwall.—Account of the receipts and disbursements of the Duchy of Cornwall 998

Post Office (Telegraphs) (Foreign Written Press Telegrams) 998

Superannuation.—Mr. J. G. Houldsworth, Assistant Superintending Engineer, Post Office.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 999

THE ANGLO-RUSSIAN CONVENTION.

Lord Curzon of Kedleston 999

Moved, That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty for Papers respecting the Convention recently concluded with the Russian Government relating to the respective interests of Great Britain and Russia in Persia, Afghanistan, and Thibet.—(*Lord Curzon of Kedleston.*)

The Earl of Cromer 1024
The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*Lord Fitzmaurice*) .. 1028
Lord Lamington 1043

Moved, "That the debate be adjourned."—(*Lord Sanderson.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to, and debate adjourned accordingly to Monday next.

ISLAND OF VATERSAY.

The Earl of Camperdown 1047

Moved, "That there be laid before the House a Return of the correspondence between Lady Gordon Cathcart and the Secretary for Scotland and the Lord Advocate, with reference to the seizure and occupation of the Island of Vatersay by squatters; and with regard to proposed future arrangements in that island."—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

Lord Hamilton of Dalzell 1047

On Question, Motion agreed to and ordered accordingly.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Eight o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: THURSDAY, 6TH FEBRUARY, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

ASSASSINATION OF THE KING OF PORTUGAL AND DUKE OF BRAGANZA.—The Comptroller of the Household reported His Majesty's Answer to the Address on the 4th day of this instant February 1048

PETITIONS.

Licensed Premises (Exclusion of Children).—27 Petitions for legislation; to lie upon the Table 1048

Liquor Traffic Veto (England).—Petition for legislation; to lie upon the Table 1049

Old Age Pensions.—Petition for legislation; to lie upon the Table 1049

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday.—14 Petitions for legislation; to lie upon the Table 1049

Small Holdings (Scotland).—Petition for legislation; to lie upon the Table 1049

Women's Enfranchisement Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table 1049

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Superannuation Act, 1887.—Mr. J. G. Houldsworth, Assistant Superintending Engineer, Post Office; to lie upon the Table 1049

Civil Services and Revenue Departments (Appropriation Accounts).—To lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 37] .. 1049

Navy (Appropriation Account).—To lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 38] 1050

Transvaal Colony (Civil Servants Dismissed).—Return presented, relative thereto; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 39] .. 1050

Telegraphs (Foreign Written Press Telegrams).—To lie upon the Table 1050

Civil Services and Revenue Departments (Supplementary Estimates, 1907–8).—To lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 35] 1050

Consolidated Fund.—Abstract Account; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 36) 1050

Duchy of Cornwall.—Account presented; to lie upon the Table 1050

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Business of the House 1105

New Members Sworn.

Walter MacMurrough Kavanagh, esquire, for County of Carlow. Thomas Charles Reginald Agar-Robartes, esquire, commonly called the Hon. Thomas Charles Reginald Agar-Robartes, County of Cornwall (Mid. or St. Austell Division) 1105

Selection.—Mr. William Abraham (Cork), Mr. Crombie, Mr. Dalziel, Mr. Fenwick, Sir Henry Aubrey-Fletcher, Sir William Brampton Gurdon, Sir Joseph Leese, Colonel Lockwood, Mr. George Roberts, Mr. Herbert Roberts, and Mr. William Frederick Smith were nominated Members of the Committee of Selection.—(*Sir William Brampton Gurdon*) 1105

NEW BILLS.

Larceny Bill.—To be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 52] 1106

Ecclesiastical Assesments (Scotland) (No. 2) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Monday, 6th April, and to be printed. [Bill 53] 1106

Crofters Holdings (Scotland) Amendment Bill.—To be read a second time upon Thursday, 27th February, and to be printed. [Bill 54] 1106

Dogs' Protection Bill.—To be read a second time To-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 55] 1106

Whale Fisheries (Scotland) Act (1907) Amendment Bill.—To be read a second time upon Tuesday, 18th February, and to be printed. [Bill 56] .. 1106

Highways Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 3rd April, and to be printed. [Bill 57] 1107

Small Landholders (Scotland) Bill.—To be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 58] 1107

Land Values (Scotland) Bill.—To be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 59] 1107

Business of the House (King's Speech) Motion for an Address.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the proceedings on the King's Speech (Motion for an Address), if under discussion at Eleven o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order (Sittings of the House)."—(*Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.*)

The House divided :—Ayes, 328 ; Noes, 78. (Division List No. 5.) .. 1107

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King's Speech (Motion for an Address).—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [29th January], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Lehmann.*)

Question again proposed.

Sir William Holland (*Yorkshire, W.R., Rotherham*) 1111
Mr. Bonar Law (*Camberwell, Dulwich*) 1113

Amendment proposed—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'But we humbly beg to represent to Your Majesty that in the interests of the trade and commerce of the United Kingdom it is highly important that the *status* of the Board of Trade should be raised, and that it should be placed on a par with the office of a Secretary of State.'"—(*Sir William Holland.*)

Question proposed, "That these words be there added."

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (*Mr. Asquith, Fifeshire, E.*) 1115
Mr. Walter Long (*Dublin, S.*) 1118
Sir J. Randles (*Cumberland, Cockermouth*) 1121
Mr. Barnes (*Glasgow, Blackfriars*) 1122
Mr. Samuel Roberts (*Sheffield, Ecclesall*) 1123
Mr. Barnard (*Kidderminster*) 1124
Mr. Morton (*Sutherland*) 1125

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. F. E. Smith (*Liverpool, Walton*) 1127
Mr. J. M. Robertson (*Northumberland, Tyneside*) 1139

Amendment proposed—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'But we humbly express our regret that Your Majesty's Plenipotentiaries at the Hague Conference were not authorised to forward the reduction of international armaments by assenting to the principle of the immunity of enemy merchant vessels, other than carriers of contraband, in time of war."—(*Mr. Frederick Edwin Smith*).

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. Bowles (*Lambeth, Norwood*) 1144
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*Sir Edward Grey, Northumberland, Berwick*) 1150
Mr. Austen Chamberlain (*Worcestershire, E.*) 1159
Colonel Seely (*Liverpool, Abercromby*) 1163
Mr. Bellairs (*Lynn Regis*) 1166
Mr. Leverton Harris (*Tower Hamlets, Stepney*) 1168
Mr. Rees (*Montgomery Boroughs*) 1173
Mr. Lupton (*Lincolnshire, Sleaford*) 1176

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question again proposed.

Sir Gilbert Parker (*Gravesend,*) 1179
Mr. Evelyn Cecil (*Aston Manor*) 1189

Amendment proposed—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'But we humbly represent to Your Majesty that this House regrets that Your Majesty's Government has not taken advantage of its opportunities to safeguard the interests of retrenched civil servants of the Transvaal Administration and secure for them due compensation and pension.'"—(*Sir Gilbert Parker.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. Wedgwood (*Newcastle-under-Lyme*) 1191
The Secretary of State for the Colonies (*Mr. Churchill, Manchester, N.W.*) 1195
Mr. Lyttelton (*St. George's, Hanover Square*) 1203

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question again proposed.

Mr. Laurence Hardy (*Kent, Ashford*) 1208
Mr. Courthope (*Sussex, Rye*) 1213

Amendment proposed—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'But we humbly represent to Your Majesty that the critical condition of the hop industry which involves so great a diminution in rural employment, requires urgent and remedial consideration from Your Majesty's Government.'"—(*Mr. Laurence Hardy.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. Asquith 1214
Mr. Akers Douglas (*Kent, St. Augustines*) 1214
Mr. Rowlands (*Kent, Dartford*) 1215

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question again proposed.

Debate arising.

Mr. CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided :—Ayes, 249; Noes, 62. (Division List No. 6.)

Main Question put accordingly and agreed to.

Resolved, That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth :—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."

To be presented by Privy Council and Members of His Majesty's Household.

SUPPLY.—Resolved, "That this House will, To-morrow, resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to His Majesty."—(*Mr. Runciman.*)

Ordered, That the several Estimates presented to this House during the present session be referred to the Committee of Supply 1219

WAYS AND MEANS.—Resolved, "That this House will, To-morrow, resolve itself into a Committee to consider the of Ways and Means for raising the Supply to be granted to His Majesty."—(*Mr. Runciman.*) 1219

House of Commons (Kitchen and Refreshment Rooms).—Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to control the arrangements for the Kitchen and Refreshment Rooms in the Department of the Serjeant at Arms attending this House.

Ordered, That the Committee do consist of Seventeen Members.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of: Mr. Barnard, Sir William Cremer, Mr. Dalziel, Mr. Fenwick, Viscount Helmsley, Colonel Sir Ivor Herbert, Mr. John Deans Hope, Sir James Jacoby, Colonel Lockwood, Mr. Lonsdale, Mr. McKillop, Mr. Power, Mr. William Redmond, Sir Edward Strachey, Mr. Thorne, Mr. Walrond, and Mr. Osmond Williams.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, "That Three be the Quorum."—(*Mr. Whiteley*) 1219

On the Motion for the adjournment of the House.

Mr. Forster (*Kent, Sevenoaks*) 1220

Mr. Speaker 1220

And, it being after half-past Eleven of the clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Order.

Adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY, 7TH FEBRUARY, 1908.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS

Private Bills (Standing Order 62 Complied with).—Madras Railway Company (Purchase) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 1221

PETITIONS.

Coal Mines (Eight Hours) Bill.—Petition against; to lie upon the Table .. 1221

Housing of the Working Classes (Ireland).—Petition for legislation; to lie upon the Table 1221

Licensed Premises (Exclusion of Children).—25 Petitions for legislation to lie upon the Table 1221

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday.—26 Petitions for legislation; to lie upon the Table 1221

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Duchy of Cornwall.—Return to be printed. [No. 10] 1221

Destructive Insects and Pests Acts, 1877 and 1907.—Order, dated 29th November, 1907, entitled "American Gooseberry Mildew (Prohibition of Importation of Bushes) Order of 1907"; to lie upon the Table 1222

Destructive Insects and Pests Acts, 1877 and 1907.—Order, dated 10th December, 1907, entitled "The American Gooseberry Mildew Order of 1907"; to lie upon the Table 1222

Employers' Liability Insurance Companies Act, 1907.—Board of Trade Rules (Underwriters); to lie upon the Table 1222

Employer's Liability Insurance Companies Acts, 1907.—Board of Trade Rules (Employers' Liability Insurance Companies); to lie upon the Table 1222

Superannuation.—Granting a special pension to Sir Mackenzie Dalzell Chalmers, K.C.B., C.S.I.; to lie upon the Table 1222

Shetland Mail Service.—Copy of Contract 1222

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Purchase of Cavehill and Whitewell Tramways 1222
Condition of Belfast Summons Court 1224
Production and Imports of Flour and Wheat 1226
Re-direction of Letters 1227
The Post Office and Press Telegrams 1227
Monaghan Agricultural School 1228
Vaccination—Payments out of Rates 1228
Socialists Meetings in Council Schools 1229
Opium Sales 1230
Appointment of Colonel Giles to position of Principal Medical Officer, London Division, Territorial Army 1230
Sergeants Messes in Provincial Towns 1231
Strength of Royal Horse and Field Artillery 1232

Elections and Registration (London Bill).—Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Dickinson (St. Pancras, N.) 1233

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Dickinson.*)

Lord R. Cecil (Marylebone, E.) 1241
Sir F. Banbury (City of London) 1243
Mr. Raphael (Derbyshire, S.) 1253

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'that,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'this House declines to proceed with a Bi which turns a county into a borough, alters the franchise, the electoral boundaries, and the hours of polling in one part of the country without regard to the rest of the United Kingdom, and which does not deal with the question of redistribution.'"—(*Sir Frederick Banbury.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. Wood (Glasgow, St. Rollox) 1253
Earl Percy 1256
The Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board (Dr. Macnamara, Camberwell, N.) 1259
Sir Henry Kimber 1267
Mr. Bowerman (Deptford) 1274
Mr. Guinness (Bury St Edmunds) 1276
The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. John Burns, Battersea) 1283
Mr. Chaplin (Surrey, Wimbledon) 1288
Sir William Bull (Hammersmith) 1294
Mr. Thornton (Clapham) 1296
Mr. Nield (Middlesex, Ealing) 1298

Mr. DICKINSON rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put;" but Mr. Speaker withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.

Mr. Nield 1300

And it being Five of the Clock, Mr. SPEAKER proceeded to interrupt the Business.

Whereupon Mr. DICKINSON rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put;" but Mr. Speaker withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question, and the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

Whereupon Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to Standing Order No. 3.

Adjourned at two minutes after Five o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS: MONDAY, 10TH FEBRUARY, 1908.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

STANDING ORDERS applicable to the following Bills complied with.—Norwich Union Fire Insurance Society [H.L.]; Llanelly Gas [H.L.]; Pontypridd Water [H.L.]; Rhymney and Aber Valleys Gas and Water [H.L.].

STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE TO THE FOLLOWING BILLS COMPLIED WITH.—Metropolitan Electric Tramways; Interoceanic Railway of Mexico.

STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE TO THE FOLLOWING BILLS NOT COMPLIED WIT
Ards and Bangor Railways.
The same were ordered to lie on the Table 1301

Ammanford Urban District Council Water Bill [H.L.]—Audenshaw and Saddleworth Urban District Councils Bill [H.L.]; Bristol Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Briton Ferry Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Camberwell and other Metropolitan Borough Councils (Superannuation) Bill [H.L.]; Herne Bay Pier Bill [H.L.]; Huddersfield Water Bill [H.L.]; Keighley Corporation Bill [H.L.]; London and District Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.]; Magee Presbyterian College (Londonderry) Bill [H.L.]; Merthyr Tydfil Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Monmouthshire County Council Bill [H.L.]; Skegness Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Swansea Valley Gas Bill [H.L.]; Wath-upon-Dearne Urban District Council Gas Bill [H.L.].—Read 2a .. 1301

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Children's Bill.—Tables of comparison between the provisions of the Bill and existing enactments 1301

Judicial Statistics, England and Wales, 1906. (PART I. CRIMINAL STATISTICS) 1301

Trade Reports: Annual Series.—No. 3956. Colombia. No. 3957. Spain.
Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 1302

Navy (Discipline—Prisons).—Rules and Regulations, for Naval Prisons .. 1302

Superannuation (Treasury Minutes).—Special pension to Sir Mackenzie Dalzell Chalmers, K.C.B., C.S.I., retired allowance to Mr. George McEvey .. 1302

Destructive Insects and Pests Acts, 1877 and 1907—Orders.—"America Gooseberry Mildew (Prohibition of Importation of Bushes) Order." "Th American Gooseberry Mildew Order" .. ..

Employers' Liability Insurance Companies Act, 1907.
Board of Trade Rules (Employers' Liability Insurance Companies).
Board of Trade Rules (Underwriters).
Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 1302

Augmentation of Benefices Act, 1863.—Return of proceedings under the Lord Chancellor's Augmentation Act.
Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. (No. 6.) .. 1302

House of Lords Manuscripts.—Calendar of the Manuscripts of the House of Lords, Volume IV. (New Series). The same was ordered to be printed. (No. 7) 1303

NEW BILLS.

Patents and Designs Bill [H.L.] (No. 8); and Fatal Accidents (Damages) (No. 2) Bill [H.L.] (No. 9).—Were presented by the Lord Granard (*E. Granard*, read 1ª, and to be printed 1303

Black Scab and Foot-and-Mouth Disease.
Lord Harris 1303
The President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries (*Earl Carrington*) 1304
The Marquess of Londonderry 1305

The Anglo-Russian Agreement.—Order of the Day read for resuming the adjourned debate on the Motion of the Lord Curzon of Kedleston that an humble Address be presented to His Majesty for Papers respecting the Convention recently concluded with the Russian Government relating to the respective interests of Great Britain and Russia in Persia, Afghanistan, and Tibet.
Lord Sanderson 1306
Viscount Midleton 1311
Lord Reay 1318
The Marquess of Lansdowne 1323
The Lord President of the Council (*The Earl of Crewe*) 1335
Lord Curzon of Kedleston 1345
Motion (by leave of the House) withdrawn.
House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Eight o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, MONDAY, 10TH FEBRUARY, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

King's Speech (Answer to Address).—The Comptroller of the Household reported His Majesty's Answer to the Address 1353

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Private Bills (Standing Order 62 Complied with).—Standing Order 62 has been complied with, viz:—Great Eastern Railway (General Powers) Bill; South-west Surburban Water Bill; Garw and Ogmore Gas Bill; Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways Bill.
Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time 1353

Private Bills [Lords].—Standing Orders complied with:—Metropolitan Electric Tramways; Interoceanic Railway of Mexico 1354

Private Bill Petitions [Lords])Standing Orders not Complied With).—Standing Orders not complied with, viz.—Metropolitan Electric Tramways [Lords]; Interoceanic Railway of Mexico [Lords].
Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 1354

Private Bill Petitions (Standing Orders not Complied With).—Standing Orders not complied with, viz.—Ards and Bangor Railways Bill.
Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 1354

PRIVATE BILLS (PETITION FOR ADDITIONAL PROVISION) (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).—Standing Orders not complied with, viz.—Margate Corporation Bill.
Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 1355

Burnley Corporation Bill; Bury and District Joint Water Board Bill; City of Glasgow Bill; Conway and Colwyn Bay Joint Water Board Bill; Criccieth Water and Improvement Bill; Doncaster Corporation Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 1355

Glyncorrwg Urban District Council Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 1355

Harwich Docks Bill; Hastings Harbour Bill; Leeds Corporation Bill.—Read a second time, and committed.

Lincoln Corporation Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 1355

Padiham Urban District Council Bill; Rochdale Corporation Bill; Slough Urban District Water Bill.—Read a second time and committed 1355

Stockport Corporation Bill.—To be read a second time To-morrow 1355

Thames Conservancy Bill; West Bridgford Urban District Water Council Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 1355

West Riding County Council Bill.—Order for Second Reading read. Order discharged, and Bill withdrawn 1355

PETITIONS.

Licensed Premises (Exclusion of Children).—8 Petitions for legislation; to lie upon the Table 1356

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday.—5 Petitions for legislation; to lie upon the Table 1356

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Judicial Statistics (England and Wales).—To lie upon the Table .. 1356

Children Bill.—Copy presented, of Tables of Comparison between the Provisions of the Bill and existing Enactments [by Command]; to lie upon the table 1356

Navy (Discipline).—Rules and Regulations for Naval Prisons; to lie upon the Table 1356

Shetland Mail Service.—Return; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 41.] 1356

Land Registry (New Buildings) Act, 1900.—Account presented; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 42.] 1356

Public Offices (Acquisition of Site) Act, 1895, etc.—Account presented; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 43] 1357

Superannuation Act, 1887.—Treasury Minute, granting a Retired Allowance to Mr. George MacEvey; to lie upon the Table 1357

Trade Reports (Annual Series).—Diplomatic and Consular Reports Annual Series, Nos. 3956 and 3957; to lie upon the Table 1357

Paper Laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House.—Augmentation of Benefices. Copy of Return of Proceedings under The Augmentation of Benefices Act, 1863, up to and inclusive of the 7th February, 1908 [by Act] 1357

Compensation on Non-Renewal of Licences.—Return 1357

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Licensing Statistics .. 1358
New Rules for China and Earthenware Trade .. 1360
Treatment of Imprisoned Women Suffragists .. 1360
Remuneration of Sub-Postmasters .. 1361
Army Reservists Residing Abroad .. 1361
The Death Rate in the United Kingdom and Germany .. 1362
Official Advertisements in the Press .. 1367
Prices of Wheat .. 1367
Manning of Fleet during Christmas Leave .. 1369
Blasphemy Prosecution .. 1370
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Losses on Small Holdings Scheme .. 1372
Suggested Tax on Theatre and Entertainment Tickets .. 1373
Raids into British Territory by Afridis .. 1373
Whipping in India .. 1374
Land Purchase in County Clare .. 1374
Abandonment of Construction of Road from Glenarm to Feystown .. 1375
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Sale of Tuberculous Cattle .. 1384
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The Council of the Secretary of State for India .. 1386
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Pension of Constable O'Halloran, Royal Irish Constabulary .. 1391
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Restoration of Evicted Tenants in County Longford .. 1393
Sale of the Maconchy Estate, North Longford .. 1393
Untenanted Grazing Land for Sale at Granard, North Longford .. 1394

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Sale of the O'Brien Estate, North Longford 1394
Restoration of James Green, Evicted Tenant of Killywilly, County Cavan .. 1395
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QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Royal Marines 1396
Royal Naval Reserve 1397
Overtime in Devonport Dockyard 1397
Greenwich Pensions 1398
Shipbuilding Policy of the Government 1398
Territorial Army—Efficiency Regulations 1399
Reservists Residing Abroad 1399
Territorial Army Association Secretaries 1400
Army Contract Inspectors 1400
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Madras Landed Estates Bill 1402
Native Labour in the Transvaal 1402
Gold Coast—Tribal Lands 1402
St. Helena 1403
Mortality of Native Labour in the Transvaal Mines 1403
Dinizulu Trial 1404
Canadian Coasting Trade Regulations 1406
New Hebrides Convention 1406
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Slave Labour in San Thomé and Principe 1408
Licensing Duties 1408
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Limerick Competitions 1414
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Medical Inspection of Schools—Speech of the Chairman of the Staffordshire Education Committee .. 1420
Cost of Medical Inspection .. 1421
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Wales and Secondary Schools Regulations .. 1423
Mall Electric Lights .. 1423
Press Dining Room .. 1423
Marble Arch Improvement .. 1424
Workmen's Compensation Government Contract .. 1424
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Foot and Mouth Disease in Scotland .. 1426
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Uig Cottar's Grievances .. 1427
House-Letting in Scotland .. 1427
Irish Land Act Finance .. 1428
Irish Sorter's Grievances .. 1428
The Law of Entail .. 1429
Grants-in-Aid to Crown Colonies .. 1429
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NEW MEMBERS SWORN.

Sir Samuel Evans, K.C., His Majesty's Solicitor-General, for County of Glamorgan (Mid Division).
Edward Alfred Goulding, esq., Parliamentary Borough of Worcester .. 1430

STANDING ORDERS.—Ordered, That the Select Committee on Standing Orders do consist of Thirteen Members:—Sir John Brunner, Sir Frederick Cawley, Mr. Ellis, Sir Thomas Esmonde, Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland, Sir Joseph Leese, Colonel Long, Mr. Mildmay, Mr. William Redmond, Mr. Shackleton, Mr. James Stuart, Mr. David Alfred Thomas, and Mr. Eugene Wason were accordingly nominated Members of the Select Committee.—(*Mr. Ellis*) .. 1430

NEW BILLS.

Dairies (Scotland) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 21st February, and to be printed. [Bill 60] .. 1430
Sea Fisheries Regulation (Scotland) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Tuesday, 18th February, and to be printed. [Bill 61] .. 1431
Railway Tickets Bill.—To be read a second time upon Tuesday, 18th February, and to be printed. [Bill 62] .. 1431
Polling Districts (County Council) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 63] .. 1431
Divorce Law Amendment Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 28th February, and to be printed. [Bill 64] .. 1431
Workmen's Compensation Bill.—To be read a second time upon Tuesday, 18th February, and to be printed. [Bill 65] .. 1431
Commons Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 29th May, and to be printed. [Bill 66] .. 1432

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 8th May, and to be printed. [Bill 67] 1432

Payment of Jurors Bill.—To be read a second time upon Tuesday, 10th March, and to be printed. [Bill 68] 1432

Children Bill.

The Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Herbert Samuel, Yorkshire, Cleveland) 1432

Motion made, and Question, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to consolidate and amend the Law relating to the protection of Children and Young Persons, reformatory and industrial schools, and juvenile offenders and otherwise to amend the Law with respect to Children and Young Persons,"—put, and agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Herbert Samuel and Mr. Secretary Gladstone.

Children Bill.—"To consolidate and amend the Law relating to the protection of Children and Young Persons, reformatory and industrial schools, and juvenile offenders, and otherwise to amend the Law with respect to Children and Young Persons," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, and to be printed. [Bill 69.]

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid.) and, subsequently, Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

ARMY (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATE, 1907-8.

The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Haldane, Haddington) 1440

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £100, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1908, for additional Expenditure in respect of the following Army Services.

Mr. Victor Cavendish (Derbyshire, W.) 1444
The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Asquith, Fifeshire, E.) .. 1448
Mr. Austen Chamberlain (Worcestershire, E.) 1450
Mr. McCrae (Edinburgh, E.) 1457
Col. R. Williams (Dorsetshire, W.) 1460
Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) 1461
Mr. Haldane 1465
Col. Kenyon-Slaney (Shropshire, Newport) 1468
Mr. Harold Cox (Preston) 1471

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £50, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Harold Cox.*)

Sir F. Banbury (City of London) 1473
Mr. Courtenay Warner (Staffordshire, Lichfield) 1476
Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1479
Mr. Haldane 1479
Col. Seely (Liverpool, Abercromby) 1480
Major Anstruther-Gray (St. Andrews Burghs) 1482
Mr. A. J. Balfour (City of London) 1484
Mr. Carlile (Hertfordshire, St. Albans) 1487

Question put, and negatived.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS, SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1907–8.

CLASS II.

2. £100,000 (Supplementary), Board of Agriculture and Fisheries.
Mr. Stanley Wilson (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness) 1489
The Treasurer of the Household (Sir Edward Strachey, Somersetshire, S.) 1490
Vote agreed to.
3. £20 (Supplementary), The Mint, including Coinage.

CLASS III.

4. £1,870, Public Trustee.
Mr. Dundas White (Dumbartonshire) 1491
The Solicitor-General (Sir Samuel Evans, Glamorganshire, Mid.) .. 1492
Vote agreed to.

CLASS V.

5. £327, Treasury Chest Fund.
Resolutions to be reported To-morrow; Committee to sit again To-morrow.

ADJOURNMENT.
Motion made, and Question, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Whiteley*)—put, and agreed to.

Adjourned at two minutes before Eight o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: TUESDAY, 11TH FEBRUARY, 1908.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Ravensthorpe Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Llanelly and Burry Port Water Bill [H.L.].—Read 2ª 1493

Clyde Navigation (Superannuation) Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.], (No. 10); and Transfer of Training Colleges (Scotland) Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.], No. 11).—Presented by the Lord Hamilton of Dalzell; 1ª; to be printed; and (pursuant to the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, Section 7) deemed to have been read 2ª, and reported from the Committee 1493

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Duchy of Lancaster—Account of the Receipts and Disbursements; laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 1493

MILK SUPPLY—PROPOSED LEGISLATION.
The Earl of Northbrook 1493
The President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries (Earl Carrington) 1499
The Chairman of Committees (The Earl of Onslow) 1500
The Earl of Camperdown 1502
The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord Tweedmouth) 1502

House adjourned at Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 11TH FEBRUARY, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Liverpool Corporation (Streets and Buildings) Bill (BY ORDER).—Read a second time, and committed 1503

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Stockport Corporation Bill (BY ORDER).—Read a second time, and committed 1503

PETITIONS.

Congo Free State.—Petition for protection of the Native races; to lie upon the Table 1503

Housing of the Working Classes (Ireland) Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table 1503

Licensed Premises (Exclusion of Children).—15 Petitions for legislation; to lie upon the Table 1503

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday.—24 Petitions for legislation; to lie upon the Table 1504

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Parliamentary Constituencies (Electors, etc.) (United Kingdom).—Return relative thereto; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 44 1504

Duchy of Lancaster.—Accounts; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 45] 1504

Papers Laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House.

Inquiry into Charities (County of Berks); to be printed. [No. 46] .. 1504

Inquiry into Charities (Administrative County of Devon); to be printed. (No. 47] 1504

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NEW BILL.

Hours of Labour Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 1st May, and to be printed. [Bill 70] 1548

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham), in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1907–8.

CLASS III.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £2,500, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1908, for Criminal Prosecutions and other Law Charges in Ireland."

Mr. Walter Long (Dublin, S.) 1548
The Attorney-General for Ireland (Mr. Cherry, Liverpool Exchange) .. 1553
Mr. Charles Craig (Antrim, S.) 1557
Mr. John Roche (Galway, E.) 1562
Mr. George Clark (Belfast, N.) 1567
Mr. J. F. Mason (Windsor) 1569
Mr. John Ward (Stoke-on-Trent) 1570
Mr. Cherry 1571
Sir E. Carson (Dublin University) 1575
Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.) 1581
The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Birrell, Bristol, N.) 1587
Mr. A. J. Balfour (City of London) 1593
Mr. Power (Waterford, E.) 1600
Mr. T. L. Corbett (Down, N.) 1601

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 207; Noes, 75. (Division List No. 7.)

Resolution to be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £5,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending 31st March, 1908, for the Expenses of the Royal Irish Constabulary."

Mr. John Redmond (Waterford) 1607
Mr. Charles Craig 1607

Motion made, and Question, "That the Chairman do Report Progress, and ask leave to sit again"—(*Mr. Charles Craig*)—put, and agreed to.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow; Committee also report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

SUPPLY [10TH FEBRUARY].—Resolutions reported.

ARMY (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATE, 1907–8.

1. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £100, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1908, for additional Expenditure in respect of services, viz.:—

	£.
Vote 5. Volunteer Corps, Pay, Allowances, etc.—	
E (*a*) Grants for the Extinction of Debts - -	350,000
E (*b*) Expenses of County Associations - - -	8,000
	358,000
Less Surpluses on other Votes - - - - -	357,900
	100

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CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1907–8.

CLASS II.

2. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £100,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1908, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries and of Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, including certain Grants in Aid."

3. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £20, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1908, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Mint, including the Expenses of Coinage."

CLASS III.

4. "That a sum, not exceeding £1,870, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1908, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of Public Trustee."

CLASS V.

5. "That a sum, not exceeding £327, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1908, for making good the Net Loss on Transactions connected with the raising of Money for the various Treasury Chests Abroad in the year 1906–7."

First Resolution read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

Lord Balcarres (*Lancashire, Chorley*) 1609

And, it being a quarter-past Eight of the Clock, Further Proceeding was postponed without Question put, pursuant to Standing Order No. 4.

RAILWAYS (NATIONALISATION)

Mr. G. A. Hardy (*Suffolk, Stowmarket*) 1612
Mr. Chiozza Money (*Paddington, N.*) 1619

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That in view of the widespread complaints on the part of traders, agriculturists, and the general public with regard to railway charges and facilities, and particularly with regard to preferential treatment of foreign goods, the time has come to consider how far these evils could be remedied by State purchase of the railways, as foreshadowed by the Railway Regulation Act of 1844."—(*Mr. G. A. Hardy.*)

Mr. Bonar Law (*Camberwell, Dulwich*) 1627
Mr. Perks (*Lincolnshire, Louth*) 1632
The President of the Board of Trade (*Mr. Lloyd-George, Carnarvon Boroughs*) 1637

Amendment proposed to the proposed Resolution—

"To leave out the words 'State purchase of the railways, as foreshadowed by the Railway Regulation Act of 1844,' in order to insert the words 'any change in the existing relations between the railways and the State.'"—(*Mr. Lloyd-George.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Resolution."

Feb. 11.] *Page*

Sir F. Banbury 1647

And, it being Eleven of the Clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

INFANT LIFE PROTECTION.—Select Committee appointed to inquire and report as to the desirability of extending the provisions of the Infant Life Protection Act, 1897, to homes in which not more than one infant is kept in consideration of periodical payment, and of altering the limit of age prescribed by Section 2 of that Act.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of: Mr. Arthur Allen, Mr. Bright, Lord Robert Cecil, Mr. Ellis, Mr. Gulland, Mr. John Taylor, and Mr. Power.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum.—(*Mr. Whiteley*) 1648

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.—Ordered, That the Committee of Public Accounts do consist of Fifteen Members.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of: Mr. Cavendish, Mr. Ashton, Mr. Bowles, Mr. Brigg, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Sir Daniel Goddard, Mr. Hazleton, Sir Robert Hobart, Mr. Leif Jones, Sir George Kekewich, Mr. Kettle, Mr. McCrae, Mr. Parker, Mr. Runciman, and Colonel Williams.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—(*Mr. Whiteley*) 1648

HOME WORK.—Select Committee appointed to consider and report upon the conditions of labour in trades in which Home Work is prevalent, and the proposals, including those for the establishment of wages boards and the licensing of work places, which have been made for the remedying of existing abuses.

Ordered, That the Committee do consist of Twenty-one Members.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of: Mr. Arkwright, Mr. Bridgeman, Sir William Bull, Mr. Boland, Mr. Brunner, Mr. Chiozza Money, Mr. Devlin, Mr. Arthur Dewar, Mr. Fell, Mr. Gooch, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Mr. Ernest Lamb, Mr. Hugh Law, Mr. Massie, Mr. Masterman, Mr. Parkes, Mr. Richardson, Mr. Robinson, Mr. Stuart Samuel, Mr. Trevelyan, and Sir Thomas Whittaker.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers and records.

Ordered, That Seven be the quorum.—(*Mr. Whiteley*) 1649

SUPPLY [10th FEBRUARY] REPORT.—Postponed Proceeding on Question, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the First Resolution, 'That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £100, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1908, for additional Expenditure in respect of the following Army services, viz.:—

	£.
Vote 5. Volunteer Corps, Pay, Allowances, etc.—	
E (*a*) Grants for the Extinction of Debts - - -	350,000
E (*b*) Expenses of County Associations - - -	8,000
	358,000
Less Surpluses on other Votes - - -	357,900
	100 ' "

Page

Resumed—

Question again proposed.

And, it being after Eleven of the Clock, and objection being taken to further Proceeding, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

Second and subsequent Resolutions to be considered To-morrow. 1649

Adjourned at five minutes after Eleven o'clock.

END OF TABLE OF CONTENTS TO VOL. CLXXXIII.

VOLUME CLXXXIII.

ERRATA.

Jan. 29th. Mr. REES' Speech.

Col. 186, line 32, *for* "unrelieved" *read* "in receipt of relief"; line 33, *before* "year" *insert* "normal"; line 49, *for* "Gulf" *read* "country."

THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(*AUTHORISED EDITION*)

IN THE

THIRD SESSION OF THE *TWENTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT* OF THE UNITED
KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*, APPOINTED TO MEET
THE TWENTY-NINTH DAY OF JANUARY IN THE EIGHTH YEAR OF THE
REIGN OF

HIS MAJESTY KING EDWARD VII.

FIRST VOLUME OF SESSION 1908.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Wednesday, 29th January, 1908.

The KING, being seated on the Throne, and the Commons being at the Bar with their Speaker, His Majesty was pleased to make a most gracious Speech to both Houses of Parliament, and then retired.

His Majesty's Speech was as follows:—

"*My Lords and Gentlemen,*

"The visit of the German Emperor with His Imperial Consort during the past autumn was a source of great pleasure to Me and to the Queen. The cordial reception given to their Majesties by My people was warmly appreciated, and cannot fail to confirm the friendly relations existing between the two nations.

"The lamented death of the King of Sweden has caused Me much sorrow.

"My relations with Foreign Powers continue to be friendly.

"My Government, animated by the sincere desire to settle by mutual agreement certain questions concerning the interests of Great Britain and Russia on the Continent of Asia, have concluded with the Russian Government a Convention relating to their respective interests in Persia, Afghanistan, and Thibet. The terms of this Convention have already been laid before you, and, acting in its spirit, the two Governments have been able, notwithstanding disturbances and complications in Persia, to maintain a peaceful policy.

"My Government have joined with the Governments of France, Germany, and Russia, in a Treaty for preserving the integrity of the Kingdom of Norway. The text of the Treaty will be published in due course.

"The correspondence recently presented to you has placed you in possession of the results of the Second International Peace Conference at The Hague, which concluded its labours in October last. The various instruments annexed to the Final Act of that Conference show the progress that has been made, and they are receiving the attentive consideration of My Government. One of the most important of these instruments establishes the great principle of an International Court of Appeal in Prize cases. My Government are considering the question of inviting representatives of the leading maritime nations to attend a Conference in London in the course of next autumn, with a view of coming to an understanding on certain important points of International Law for the guidance of the Court.

"The condition of the Christian and Mussulman population in the Macedonian vilayets shows no improvement: the bands of different nationalities continue to pursue a campaign of violence, and the situation gives serious cause for anxiety. The Great Powers of Europe have agreed to present to the Turkish Government a scheme for the improvement of the judiciary in that region, and My Government have made further proposals to the Sultan, and also to the Great Powers, for dealing effectually with the principal causes of disturbance.

"My Government are fully aware of the great anxiety felt with regard to the treatment of the native population in the Congo State. Their sole desire is to see the government of that State humanely administered in accordance with the spirit of the Berlin Act, and I trust that the negotiations now proceeding between the Sovereign of the Congo State and the Belgian Government will secure this object.

"Negotiations are being conducted with the Government of the United States for an Agreement to refer to the International Court of Arbitration at The Hague questions pending between the two Governments which relate to the Newfoundland fisheries. It is hoped that by this friendly procedure a long-standing source of difficulty may be satisfactorily removed.

"The difficulty which had arisen respecting Japanese immigration into Canada has been settled on terms agreed upon between the respective Governments.

"I sincerely lament to have to inform you that, owing to failure of the rains over parts of India during last year, conditions of scarcity accompanied by much sickness have arisen. Prompt and well-considered measures of relief have been taken, and the situation is faced both by the stricken people and by My officers with courage and hope."

"*Gentlemen of the House of Commons,*

"Estimates for the expenditure of the year will in due course be laid before you.

"In connection with the financial arrangements of the year, proposals will be brought forward for making better provision for old age, and legislation with that object will be submitted."

"*My Lords and Gentlemen,*

"Bills will be laid before you for the following purposes:—

"To amend the Law of Licensing in England and Wales.

"To amend the Law relating to Elementary Education in England and Wales.

"To regulate the hours of underground labour in Coal Mines.

"To amend the Acts relating to the Housing of the Working Classes, and to regulate the laying out of land needed for the development of growing urban centres.

"To amend the system of Valuation of property in England and Wales for the assessment of Imperial and Local charges.

"To improve and extend University Education in Ireland.

"To amend in various particulars the Land Purchase (Ireland) Act of 1903, especially with reference to the compulsory acquisition of untenanted land in connection with the relief of congestion.

"To establish an authority for the control and improvement of the Port and Waterway of London.

"To consolidate and amend the Law relating to the Protection of Children and to the treatment of Juvenile Offenders.

"The Bills relating to Scottish Land and Valuation, which were introduced last session but failed to pass into law, will be again submitted to you.

"Your labours upon these, and upon all other matters, I humbly commend to the blessing of Almighty God."

SAT FIRST.

The Marquess of Bristol sat first in Parliament after the death of his uncle.

The Lord Clanwilliam (*E. Clanwilliam*) sat first in Parliament after the death of his father.

The Lord Aldenham sat first in Parliament after the death of his father.

The Lord Nunburnholme sat first in Parliament after the death of his father.

The Viscount Torrington sat first in Parliament after the death of his father.

The Lord Saye and Sele sat first in Parliament after the death of his father.

Several Lords took the Oath.

Edmund Arbuthnott (*Lord Bishop of Manchester*) was (in the usual manner) introduced.

ROLL OF THE LORDS.

Garter King of Arms attending, delivered at the Table (in the usual manner) a list of the Lords Temporal in the Third Session of the Twenty-eighth Parliament of the United Kingdom—the same was ordered to lie on the Table.

REPRESENTATIVE PEERS FOR IRELAND.

Writs and Returns electing the Lord Curzon of Kedleston a Representative Peer for Ireland in the room of the late Lord Kilmaine, deceased, with the certificate of the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland annexed thereto: delivered (on oath), and certificate read as follows:—

"Crown and Hanaper Office in Ireland.

"In pursuance of an Act passed in the Parliament of Ireland in the fortieth year of the reign of His late Majesty King George the Third intituled 'An Act to regulate the mode by which the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and the Commons to serve in the Parliament of the United Kingdom on the part of Ireland shall be summoned and returned to the said Parliament,' I hereby certify that the several Writs hereunto annexed for electing a Temporal Peer of Ireland in the room of Francis William, Baron Kilmaine, deceased, did issue from this the Crown Office in Chancery in Ireland to the Peers therein severally named, and the said Peers did severally make the Returns thereto which to the said Writs are respectively annexed. And I do further certify that it appears from the said Writs and Returns that the right hon. George Nathaniel, Baron Curzon of Kedleston, has been chosen by a majority of votes to be the Peer to sit and vote on the part of Ireland in the House of Lords of the United Kingdom in the room of Francis William, Baron Kilmaine, deceased. And whereas the name of the said George Nathaniel, Baron Curzon of Kedleston, is not upon the Roll of the Peers of Ireland whose right to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland has been certified by the Clerk of the Parliaments of the United Kingdom into the Crown Office in Chancery in Ireland by direction of the House of Lords as having been admitted by the House of Lords, I do further certify that it appears from the said Writs and Returns that the right hon. Frederick Oliver, Baron Ashtown, whose name is upon the aforesaid Roll of the Peers of Ireland, has received the next highest number of votes. All which I attest this 21st day of January, 1908.

"Clerk of the Crown and Hanaper and
Permanent Secretary to the Lord
Chancellor of Ireland.

"To the Clerk of the Parliaments of the
United Kingdom of Great Britain
and Ireland."

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord LOREBURN): Your Lordships will observe that this Return is not in the usual form, and that it contains more than is required by the Statute. The object, I presume, is to place the House in a position to decide whether a writ should issue to Lord Curzon or not. The point raised is whether Lord Curzon, not having claimed his right to vote for a representative peer for Ireland, and, consequently, no such claim having been admitted, is thereby disabled from being elected. Your Lordships will probably expect my opinion on the point. I have examined the Act of Union and am satisfied that Lord Curzon, whose name appears on the Ulster roll as a temporal peer of Ireland, might properly be elected, although he has made no claim to be entitled to vote for a representative peer. The Act requires that those who vote for a representative peer shall have claimed and had their claim admitted by this House, but the Act makes no requirements as to the person to be elected, except that he should be a temporal peer of Ireland. There are certain precedents quoted to a Committee of your Lordships' House in 1874 which, perhaps, favour this view, but I prefer to rely upon the Act itself. The Act, I think, is clear, and in my opinion Lord Curzon is entitled to his writ and to take his seat in the ordinary course.

THE EARL OF HALSBURY: I am sure the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack requires no confirmation from me; but it may be satisfactory to him if I say that I entirely concur in the view he has expressed. Some ingenious person appears to have suggested that something should be read into the Act of

Union which is not in it—namely, that an elector must be an elector before he can be elected, for which there is not the slightest foundation. I note that the noble and learned Lord quoted a certain precedent. I confess that if the matter were decided upon the precedents I should feel some doubt, but really there is no point at all. Unless you put a new section into the Act of Union there cannot be the least doubt. The noble and learned Lord said the point intended to be raised was so and so. I can only say that to my mind there is no point at all in the matter.

Then the Lord Curzon of Kedleston took the Oath.

SELECT VESTRIES.

Bill, *pro formâ*, read 1ª.

ADDRESS IN REPLY TO HIS MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

*Lord AIREDALE: My Lords, in rising to move that an humble Address be presented to His Majesty thanking him for his gracious Speech, I must first ask for the indulgence of your Lordships for one who has so recently entered this House, and who can, therefore, scarcely be said even to have emerged from the period of assimilation. I will first refer to the visit of the German Emperor, for which we are indebted to the influence of His Gracious Majesty the King. The progress — the remarkable progress — which the German Emperor and Empress made through the streets of London, gave the people of this country an opportunity of showing their respect to a great Monarch, and of expressing their friendly feelings towards the great German people. The death of Oscar King of Sweden is greatly to be deplored. He was a kind and constitutional Monarch. It so happens that I had a personal opportunity of judging of the kindly feelings of King Oscar towards the British nation. I was a member of a scientific society which visited Stockholm a few years ago. The King of Sweden and his sons attended a discussion at our ordinary proceedings, and we were afterwards received at the Royal Palace, the King thus giving an expression of friendly feeling towards the English people.

The Russian Convention, which is referred to in His Majesty's gracious Speech, is an event of the greatest importance. It settles by mutual agreement questions which have been for years the cause of difficulties and disputes and anxieties between the two nations. The declaration of the respective interests of Russia and Great Britain clear the air. A great weight has been lifted by the declaration that the Governments of Great Britain and Russia mutually engage to respect the integrity and independence of Persia, and have agreed not to seek concessions for the subjects of either in areas which are clearly defined. The condition of Persia at this moment is most deplorable, and we may be very thankful that this Convention has been concluded, for while these domestic difficulties are proceeding, which are no concern of ours, suspicions that this nation or that nation might intervene are finally removed. The Russian Government further recognise that Afghanistan is outside the sphere of Russian influence; Great Britain disclaims on its part any intention of changing the political *status* of Afghanistan; and all the difficulties and anxieties and responsibilities that we have had in years past with reference to the north-western frontier, if not removed, at any rate must be very much minimised. With reference to Thibet, into which country we recently made a romantic expedition, the Convention further records engagements by which Russia and Great Britain undertake to respect the territorial integrity of Thibet. They undertake not to enter into negotiations with Thibet except through the intervention of the Chinese Government, nor to send political representatives there. As a railwayman I regret to see that they have agreed not to promote railway enterprise; but, as a railway shareholder, in such an enterprise, perhaps I should not be so anxious.

The Hague Conference, at which assembled a numerous array of the representatives of forty-seven States of widely different importance, is an event of great interest. As employers of labour we know the value of personal conferences, which bring conflicting parties into direct relations. The value of these personal relations at such a Conference must be great in the future negotiation of affairs.

The question of the reduction of armaments was not under discussion at the Conference, but His Majesty's Government have expressed their willingness to consider this important matter whenever it may be thought wise to do so. The establishment of an International Court of Appeal is a matter of the greatest value. Its existence already bears fruit. As you are aware, the United States Government are willing so to refer questions pending with relation to the Newfoundland Fisheries, and this at the suggestion of Sir Robert Bond, the representative of the Newfoundland Government at the Conference. These questions have caused difficulties between the two nations for generations.

His Majesty refers to the state of Macedonia. The condition of affairs in that country is deplorable. Raids are made by hostile bands, and are difficult to control. His Majesty's Government continue to act with the great Powers, and are suggesting new measures for dealing with this question.

With regard to the Congo, His Majesty's Government desire to see that State humanely administered. The conditions of labour in the Congo Free State are terrible—absolutely those of slavery. The people of Great Britain are watching with great interest the negotiations which are proceeding between the Belgian Government and the Ruler of the Congo State, and we shall rejoice if the Belgian Government take over the control of that State, for then we shall have a constitutional government with which we can negotiate.

The question of Old-age Pensions is raised, and legislation will be submitted with the object of making better provision for old age. There is a general agreement that some provision should be made for the distressed in their old age. The real difficulty is whether the scheme should be a contributory or non-contributory one. I am pleased to see that Lord Roberts is making a great effort to support distressed warriors in their old age, and I ask whether the aged agricultural labourer or unskilled labourer has not also rendered his service to the State, and is not equally worthy of some assistance and support in his old age. You say, "Yes, but they should contribute." I ask how the agricultural labourer or the ordinary unskilled labourer can contribute out of the scanty earnings he receives; and probably it is better he should be expending his wages upon the proper bringing up of his family than in penurious saving which causes them to suffer.

The difficulties of the situation in India owing to the threatened famine are very great. I may remind the House that they have been much alleviated by the extension of the railway system, and it is by an extension of railways in India, by closer and more rapid communication with the different districts, that we may hope still further to mitigate the difficulties of these recurring famines.

The law of licensing in England and Wales is to be dealt with in the coming session. The popular demand is for a reduction of the hours and also for some appropriation of the value which is conferred by the community when new licences are given. As an employer of some fifty years standing, I can testify to the great improvement in the bearing and the character of the working people with whom I am closely associated. I attribute some of it to education, but much of it in later years is due to restriction in the hours of opening and to the greater control of matters of licensing. I hope that the hours will be further reduced, for these changes contribute materially to the elevation of the working people.

The law relating to elementary education and to religious teaching in elementary schools will have to be dealt with. For more than thirty years simple Bible teaching in the primary schools has been conducted with the general approval of the great school boards, and it is on that system, and on that system only, that you can hope to have religious teaching. The alternative is secular teaching only, which I for one should greatly deplore. A Bill will be introduced to regulate the hours of underground labour in coal mines—what is called the Miners Eight Hours Bill. Your Lordships will be aware that there has been a committee of inquiry, the result of whose deliberations is to confirm the general opinion that by limitation of hours you will have restriction of output; that if you have a restriction of output you will have an increase in cost. Coal is the primary necessity of all our manufactures. In the iron and steel trade, with which I am associated, each ton of iron or steel consumes several tons of coal, and if you increase the cost of coal you will increase the cost of steel and iron. You will thereby enhance the cost of raw material and diminish the demand for our ships, engines, and manufactures, and consequently diminish the employment of those engaged in those special industries. I think we may appeal, therefore, to those workmen who are so strenuous in the demand for a reduction of hours in the coal trade to be conciliatory, and not to insist absolutely on the eight hours of the original Bill.

The question of university education in Ireland is a knotty one, and we are hoping that it will be dealt with. It seems so unreasonable that university education should be denied to members of different denominations because a scheme cannot be provided for it. The Bills relating to Scottish land and valuation, which were introduced last session but failed to pass into law, will be again submitted to Parliament. I notice that the noble Marquess, the Leader of the Opposition, said not long ago that the "House of Lords is an Assembly which interferes rarely and reluctantly between the people and the achievement of those objects which the popular Assembly has favoured." If the popular Assembly once more pronounces by an overwhelming majority in favour of these measures, let us hope that the doctrine which the noble Marquess then laid down will be practised with the wisdom and discretion which has always distinguished this Assembly. I beg to move.

Lord NUNBURNHOLME: My Lords, in rising to second the Address, which has been so gracefully and admirably moved by my noble friend Lord Airedale, I would humbly ask your Lordships to accord me a full measure of that courteous indulgence which you invariably give to those who rise to address this House for the first time. I would ask your Lordships to give me that same kindly hearing that you gave to my father on the few occasions on which he had the honour of speaking in this Chamber. Your Lordships will not wish me to do more than mention a few salient features of the legislative programme for the ensuing session. With regard to education, may I express my regret that your Lordships were unable to come to an agreement upon the Education Bill of 1906? Is not all reform in its inception mainly experimental, and would it not be reasonable to form a basis of experiment by eliminating the most controversial material? Can we not as a nation unite in constructing a system of education which shall be free from all sectarianism—a system which shall be for the advancement of the intellectual progress of our children, which shall teach them the fundamental principles of right and wrong, and fit them to take their position in life as trustworthy and well-equipped members of society?

My Lords, we rejoice to see in the gracious Speech from the Throne that a Bill is to be brought in for promoting the cause of temperance and regulating those fictitious clubs which offer an illicit and unfair competition to a trade already controlled and recognised by the law. The commercial community of this great Free Trade country will greatly appreciate the International Court of Appeal to be set up at The Hague, and we shall, I am sure, all be very glad to know that a Conference is to be held, or probably will be held, to frame laws for the guidance of that tribunal. In the past our commerce has suffered considerable delay and havoc through the action of belligerent Powers with regard to contraband of war and to the *status* of vessels within the sphere of operations. May we not look with hope that the new machinery to be set up will ensure fair play to the non-combatant mercantile community of all neutral Powers?

As one connected with the shipping trade of this country, I beg leave for a moment to turn to the promised legislation with regard to the Port of London. As your Lordships are aware, the size and the depth of our Thames docks are totally inadequate to modern requirements. In this respect we are far behind many of our Continental rivals. Moreover, there is urgent need of one single authority to control the waterway of our great port, such as has been successfully established in regard to the rivers Mersey, Tyne, and Humber. I trust that your Lordships will give careful consideration to any Bill brought in to further these objects.

Your Lordships will deeply sympathise with our fellow-subjects in India in the sufferings they have undergone consequent on the partial failure of the crops. I am afraid it has even affected our own people in this country. The wretched harvest of North America and Russia, together with the failure in India, have raised the price of food to our people and of raw materials to our manufactures.

Nevertheless, my Lords, one is glad to recognise that this natural rise in the price of commodities need give us no cause for dissatisfaction with our present system of free imports. May I venture to hope that all sections of this House will view with approval the proposals of His Majesty's Government for dealing with some vital problems of our social system, such as improved housing for those whose lot is unhappily cast in rough places, some provision or means of subsistence free from the bitter taint of charity for those who have grown old in service, more rational hours of labour in our mines, and more careful nurture of our little children.

I gather, my Lords, there may be apprehension in the minds of some of us that the policy of the wage-earning community is for the destruction of our national institutions by vast projects of social upheaval. I have had the honour of representing in another place a constituency largely consisting of the labouring class, and I am convinced that the aspirations and ambitions of that class mainly tend towards their emancipation from the unnatural conditions and the unhappy surroundings in which the lives of many of them are spent through no fault of their own. I speak in the full confidence that in every section of this House we are moved with but one impulse—namely, the conscientious discharge of those high duties which we hold in trust for the benefit of the nation. My Lords, I have the honour to second the Address, and beg most respectfully to thank you for the kindly consideration you have accorded me.

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty in reply to the gracious Speech from the Throne."—(*Lord Airedale.*)

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My Lords, I trust that the two noble Lords to whom we have just had the advantage of listening will permit me to offer them our congratulations upon the way in which they have acquitted themselves of their task. Both those noble Lords have had the advantage of some House of Commons experience. Both of them will, no doubt, be valuable recruits in this House, and we hope that they may frequently take part in our deliberations. But, in addition to Parliamentary experience, both of them have experience of another kind. The noble mover spoke of himself as a railway man; the noble seconder referred to the fact that he was connected with the shipping trade of this country. I am reminded that, recently, a distinguished colleague of the noble Marquess opposite told his audience that the House of Lords possibly knew something about parsons and gamekeepers, but that it knew nothing about trade. I cannot but think that, when the noble Marquess selected for the mover of the Address the noble Lord who has not only had the advantage of being president of the National Liberal Association, but also president of the Leeds Chamber of Commerce, and of the Iron and Steel Institute, he must have intended to administer a sly rebuke to his colleague.

My Lords, we rejoice to find once more in the Royal Speech the ever welcome announcement that His Majesty's relations with foreign Powers continue to be friendly. May every succeeding Government contribute its share towards that most desirable result. I think it is natural that closely connected with that paragraph should be the paragraph in which His Majesty refers to the recent visit of the Emperor of Germany. These Royal visits are not mere parade movements. They afford valuable opportunities for the discussion of international questions between the Sovereigns themselves and between their advisers, and they give to our illustrious visitors opportunities of judging for themselves of the friendly tone and demeanour of the people of this country.

His Majesty's Government are able to announce an important step which should contribute not a little, I think, towards the maintenance of international peace. I refer to the conclusion of a Convention with Russia in regard to the affairs of Persia, Afghanistan, and Thibet. We on this side of the House are certainly predisposed in favour of that Convention. We regard such Conventions as the proper mode of dealing with complications of the kind which this Convention is intended to anticipate, and I think I am justified in saying that, had we remained in office, it is more than probable that we too would have been approached by the Russian Government, and that we should have made an effort to conclude a satisfactory arrangement with them. I think His Majesty's Government are justified in saying that during the recent Persian crisis the existence of the Convention afforded a considerable guarantee for international peace. It is in these moments of crisis that strong Powers are sometimes tempted, especially if they are competitors for influence over a weak Power, to steal a march one upon the other, and I have, no doubt, that the existence of this Convention may have had the effect of preventing anything of that kind from taking place.

But, my Lords, these international instruments after all embody business transactions, and it is from the business point of view that people will naturally regard them. I think His Majesty's Government must be aware that by some persons, and by persons qualified to have decided opinions upon such subjects, the bargain is open to criticism on certain points, and such criticisms have been very plainly and distinctly offered. This would not be at all a convenient opportunity for bringing on a discussion on such matters, and I merely refer to them because I think it very probable that His Majesty's Government will be afforded an opportunity of explaining these matters, and of meeting these criticisms. I can assure His Majesty's Government that, so far as we are concerned, they will certainly not be offered in an unfriendly spirit, and no one will be better pleased than we shall be if His Majesty's Government are able to reassure us as to any point in regard to which we may entertain misgivings.

There follows, almost immediately afterwards, an interesting paragraph referring to the Peace Conference whch has recently sat at the Hague. A Blue-book has lately been laid on the table of the House dealing with that question, and I find in it a despatch, signed by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in which he frankly admits that the results of the Conference have, in some respects, been of a disappointing character. If the great expectations with which we entered into the Conference have not been fulfilled, it is perhaps to some extent due to the fact that those expectations were a little exaggerated. I think, for example, the Prime Minister—and may I be permitted, in passing, to express our satisfaction at knowing that he has returned to this country in improved health—was a little too much inclined to believe that this Conference would bring about a general reduction of armaments on the part of the great Powers. As to that, we have a very remarkable comment in the shape of the speech which was delivered quite lately by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. The Secretary of State told his hearers that the British Navy, far from being too strong for our needs, was not more than sufficient for them, and that, if foreign Powers were to continue to increase their naval strength, it would be necessary for us to follow suit if we desired that our homes should be safe from attack. My Lords, that is a momentous statement coming from a Minister whose calmness of judgment is as conspicuous as is that of Sir Edward Grey.

Your Lordships will have seen the Blue-book relating to the proceedings at The Hague. It is not very easy to separate what I may call the gold from the dross in it. The Conference has produced no less than thirteen Conventions, a great many of them wanting the signatures of those Powers whose signatures matter most. It has produced eight resolutions, or "opinions" as they are called—pious opinions perhaps they might be called—which, I take it, represent the strivings of the international conscience after somewhat remote and unattainable ideals; and there is the declaration in regard to the use of balloons in the time of war. I wish to express my satisfaction that Sir Edward Fry and his colleagues should have been authorised to sign only what is described as the final Act. The final Act, by the way, occurs, not as one would expect it at the end of the series of documents, but at the very beginning.

I understand that in the view of His Majesty's Government the whole of these conventions require careful examination before this country is committed to them; and that is particularly true of the convention referred to in the gracious Speech—I mean that dealing with the creation of an International Court of Appeal in prize cases. We should all of us rejoice to see such a Court established, if we were quite sure that it would be properly constituted and that it would administer a code of regulations thoroughly considered beforehand and approved by the Great Maritime Powers affected by them. Mention has been made of the great inconvenience to which this country had been put owing to the absence of such a Prize Court; and any one who recollects the events of the Russo-Japanese war will well remember the grave anxiety which was occasioned to us by the absence of such a Court. But these ills, intolerable as they were, would be almost more tolerable than those which we might endure if we found ourselves placed entirely in the hands of an imperfectly-constituted tribunal, administering, not a recognised code of international law, but precepts which it might itself lay down from time to time for its own guidance. I rejoice, therefore, that these matters are to be maturely considered and that the particular point on which I have dwelt is to be examined by a conference of maritime Powers this autumn.

The Speech next deals with the melancholy subject of Macedonia. It is impossible to read the paragraph without an approach to a feeling of despair. I have seen it stated in the last few days that in the course of four years there have been no less than 10,000 deaths from violent causes in the Macedonian vilayets. What a melancholy result of the efforts of European diplomacy! I am well aware of the immense obstacles with which the Government of this country has had to contend in dealing with this Macedonian problem. There is, in the first place, the obstinacy and shortsightedness of the Turkish Government. There is, in the next place, the incurable timidity of the Powers—a timidity which in great measure is due to their sincere dread of provoking a European crisis in that part of the world. But I am glad to see that His Majesty's Government are able to announce to us that the Great Powers of Europe are to present to the Turkish Government not only a scheme for the improvement of the justiciary, a matter of first-rate importance, but also—and the words are significant—

> "further proposals for dealing effectually with the principal causes of disturbance."

I trust that those proposals will be pressed home, and if it should be the case that the Turkish Government proves still recalcitrant, if the advice of Europe continues to be flouted as it has been flouted in the past, then I hope the Powers will take courage and will press upon the Porte proposals still more far-reaching, the efficacy of which shall not be impaired by any attempt to deal tenderly with Turkish susceptibilities.

Of the Congo State I will only say that I earnestly trust that the negotiations between the Sovereign of the Congo State and the Belgian Government may proceed satisfactorily and that nothing that is done in this country may impede or embarrass the course of those negotiations. It is pleasant to read that the difficulties which have arisen as to the Newfoundland fisheries between this country and the United States are likely to go to arbitration. We can conceive no other mode of settling differences between two friendly Powers belonging to the same race and closely connected by innumerable ties, neither of whom could bear to contemplate any but a peaceful solution of the questions at issue.

Then we have a satisfactory announcement as to the adjustment of a difficulty which might have proved acute between the Japanese Government and the Dominion of Canada. May I be permitted to say that that settlement seems to be most creditable, not only to the Government of the Dominion, but also to the Government of our ally, who has exhibited, not for the first time, a self-restraint and a sagacity which have elicited the admiration of all those who have come into close contact with their diplomatic proceedings? I will not dwell upon the question of the scarcity which has arisen in India; but I believe that it is correct to say that in the improvement of railway communications lie our great safeguards against serious misfortunes due to this cause. Thanks to the improvement of those communications, the measures of relief are so admirably organised in India at this moment that, although these recurrent scarcities no doubt entail suffering and the retardation of progress, they rarely lead to serious loss of human life.

I have come to the end of that part of the Speech which reviews the situation in different parts of the world. It is a somewhat extensive field. It embraces all the four quarters of the globe; and it seems to me somewhat remarkable that in that wide review there should be a complete omission of any reference to a matter which concerns us much more nearly than remoter events—I mean the condition of a part of the United Kingdom itself. My Lords, how simple it would have been to have added an Irish paragraph to those on which I have commented. The Macedonian paragraph, with a few very slight verbal alterations, would have met the case. Might it not have read somewhat as follows:—

> "The condition of the loyal population in several important Irish counties shows no improvement. Bands, instigated by Nationalist Members of Parliament, continue to pursue a campaign of violence, and the situation gives serious cause for anxiety."

Then there might have been a few words thrown in, as in the Macedonian paragraph, to intimate that His Majesty's Government were taking measures for

> "dealing effectually with the principal cause of disturbance."

I feel bound to say that in my view the state of Ireland at the present moment is deplorable and scandalous, and that its condition is due entirely to the blind and weak administration of His Majesty's Ministers. I do not believe that ever in the history of this country has a Government, which called itself a strong Government, so connived at an attack upon a respectable class of the community, a class entitled to protection at their hands. I could detain your Lordships all night if I were to cite my authorities.

Your Lordships recollect the words recently spoken, not by an Irish landlord, but by a learned Judge. At Longford a few days ago Judge Curran reminded the grand jury that in October last he had referred to the persistent and long-continued conspiracy against certain individuals in the hope that the authorities would put an end to this persecution, and afford these unfortunate people some protection. He found that not a finger had been raised, and no movement had been made by the authorities for the defence or the protection of these people, and he hoped that, even at the eleventh hour, the authorities would step in and extend to them, not mercy, but common justice, and afford them that protection to which they were entitled. Another learned Judge has referred to his "degrading experience" upon the bench at Dublin, and your own Attorney-General not long ago spoke of the prevalence of mob law, and characterised the conduct of the people in a particular district as worse than that of West African savages.

What rejoinder are we to expect from noble Lords opposite? I wish to anticipate an argument that may be used. I may be told that it is only a local phenomenon. Now it is quite true that the conspiracy and its sinister results are confined to a certain number of counties, but the object of the conspiracy is to break down a particular industry, and it is only where that industry exists that the conspiracy has been set on foot. That is the explanation of the local character of these events. When, however, you tell me that this is only a local matter, I would reply: You might as well tell a patient who has got gangrene in his foot that he need not be anxious about it, because the other organs of his body are for the moment in a healthy condition. I want to anticipate another rejoinder that may be made. I shall be told that at this moment there is a lull.

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (The Marquess of RIPON): Hear, hear!

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: The noble Marquess cheers that observation; I hope he will forgive me if I tell him that to my mind the existence of this lull which comforts him so much is a very disquieting symptom indeed, because we know how that lull has been brought about. I am not going to accuse the Chief Secretary of having made a bargain with the law-breakers. He has repudiated any contract. He has told us that there has been nothing—no protocol, no agreement. I take his word for it. But what has happened is this—an impression has been allowed to go forth that on certain points the wishes of the Nationalist Party are to be complied with. There is to be a Bill dealing with university education in Ireland acceptable to the Nationalist Party; and in regard to cattle-driving, intimations have been made which really suggest to one's mind the conclusion that cattle-driving will no longer be necessary because the Chief Secretary himself is going to have one huge cattle-drive which will obliterate the grazing industry in Ireland. I do not think I do the Chief Secretary injustice. At the very moment when Judge Curran at Longford was dwelling upon the state of the country, Mr. Birrell at Reading announced that what caused him anxiety was the condition of Connaught, the problem of the congested districts, and how the grasslands of Ireland were to be broken up and distributed among the people who required them for a livelihood. And in the meanwhile, while these measures are being matured, the Chief Secretary, as the saying is, is to be given a chance. And that is the explanation of the lull which fills the minds of His Majesty's Government with so much satisfaction. Let me say only one word in passing with regard to what I can only describe as this crazy policy of migrating the population of the western seaboard to the grazing lands of Central Ireland. Let the Chief Secretary satisfy himself, before he begins to apportion the lands of Roscommon among migrants from the wilder regions of Connaught, that the men of Roscommon will allow the operation to take place. I do not believe they will.

What has been the result of these events? Never within our time has Ireland had such a set-back as she has received during the disastrous *régime* which at present prevails. You took over from us an Irish heritage which was in good order. You gave us a receipt for it. The late Chief Secretary announced that he took office at a moment of tranquillity; the present Chief Secretary congratulated himself upon the comparative peacefulness and crimelessness of the country. Well, my Lords, to what was it that that peacefulness and crimelessness were due? I say mainly to the great settlement of the land question embodied in the Act of 1903. It was a settlement which filled every one with hope, which landlords and tenants alike were endeavouring to give effect to. But before you had been in office many weeks you allowed it to become evident that you meant to break down that settlement. That was the first thing. Then you announced publicly that Ireland was to be governed by Irish ideas, not the ideas of the reasonable law-abiding population of Ireland, but the ideas of a clamorous minority which is only formidable because you always run away from it. Then you refused to renew the Peace Preservation Act; your love of free trade was so intense that you must needs have free trade in firearms amongst people whom your own Attorney-General describes as not much better than West African savages.

What is the result? I read yesterday the following statement made by the district inspector of constabulary at Gort: In his district there have been thirty-four outrages in twelve months, two cases of firing at and wounding persons, and fifteen cases of firing into houses—50 per cent. of the outrages being thus due to the improper use of those firearms which you put into the hands of every malcontent in Ireland. When this new cattle-driving conspiracy reared its head you ran away from it, you were afraid to face it, and because you were afraid to face it you tried to convince people that it was a small thing of no importance. We remember how the truth was blurted out by the noble Lord who sits at the end of the Government bench (Lord Denman), for what we thought was a carelsss indiscretion on his part turns out to have represented the real mind of His Majesty's Government.

Then you pledged yourselves that you would be content with the ordinary law, well knowing the uselessness of the ordinary law in circumstances such as those which have arisen in Ireland. The objection that you took to using what we commonly call the Crimes Act, was that you yourselves had opposed the Crimes Act when it passed through Parliament. Was there ever a doctrine so dangerous and unconstitutional? Does it not really come to this, that if that doctrine is to prevail the criminal classes will have to look not at the Statute-book, but at the pages of *Hansard* to see who it was supported a particular measure, and who opposed it. The noble Earl the Lord President addressed himself to this subject the other day, and reproached us with adhesion to what he called the "Tory way;" he said it was our custom—

> "to use without compunction methods of law and criminal justice totally different from those in use in this country."

May I be permitted to observe that if the methods are different so are the circumstances. But is the noble Earl quite sure that the procedure of the Crimes Act is totally different from that which prevails in other parts of the United Kingdom? May I recommend him to make inquiries as to the contents of the Scottish Statute-book? I believe he will find that in the ordinary law of Scotland there are provisions which, *mutatis mutandis*, correspond exactly with the provisions of this extraordinary law which His Majesty's Government are to keep in a glass case to look at, but which they will on no account be persuaded to use.

Then what is the idea of the ordinary law as it presents itself to the mind of His Majesty's Government? I find that they are proceeding under an Act of the reign of Edward III. and another Act of the reign of William IV. That is their idea of the ordinary law, and that is the law which they are setting in motion, not against those who instigate these crimes, but against the rank and file, the dupes who are led by the obscure Members of Parliament who have succeeded in plunging the country into the state in which we now have it. The result has been such a failure of justice in Ireland as I believe has never taken place before in these islands. I hope some one will move for a return of the number of cases of agrarian crime, of the number of persons who have been put upon their trial, and of the number of convictions which have taken place; and if in the shape of marginal notes we might have added the observations of learned Judges, I think the whole document would be one very instructive indeed to the people of this country. The Chief Secretary has announced that he is ready to explain and justify his conduct. I hope we shall have the explanation and the justification, if there be one, in this House; but let me say that it must be a very different kind of explanation and a very different kind of justification from any which have yet been given to the public. One other observation. I trust I shall not be met by the old story that the root cause of these events is to be found in our refusal to associate the people of Ireland with the management of their own affairs. That argument rests upon a twofold fallacy. The first fallacy is the belief that this cattle-driving conspiracy is in any way due to the discontent of the people of Ireland with the system of government—it is a purely predatory and selfish movement, so selfish, indeed, that those who promote it are content to ruin what is, I suppose, the most important of all Irish industries. These are the people who, to use the Chief Secretary's words—

> "Have set their eyes upon the territories occupied by the graziers,"—

and, because they want them for themselves, are determined to make these grass farms untenable. That is the beginning and end of the movement. The second fallacy is that any ameliorative measures which you can imagine for Ireland, whether they be agrarian or political, can have a chance of success under present conditions. No measures can succeed unless you are able, first of all, to show the people of Ireland that you know how to make the law respected. If you cannot do that, I care not what your measures are, they are predestined to failure.

I pass for a moment to the remainder of the speech. There follows a statement that—

> "Proposals are to be brought forward for making better provision for old age,"—

and that legislation with that object is to be submitted. Of course, we know that that phrase means old-age pensions, and nothing else. That is a most momentous announcement, and I hope the Government will forgive me when I tell them that they seem to have made it at a very inopportune moment and on quite insufficient consideration. We are told that we are to have this year only the beginning of such a scheme, but we know perfectly well what is the end aimed at—the end is to be a system of universal and non-contributory old-age pensions. That is a tremendous plunge. There have been previous inquiries into this subject which have left upon the minds of those who have followed them grave misgivings as to the result of this new policy, and at this moment there is proceeding the Royal Commission presided over by Lord George Hamilton, which is inquiring into the whole subject of Poor Law relief. I should have thought it would have been wise to elicit all the information you can as to the present system before you attempt to graft upon it these enormous and far-reaching excrescences.

If for no other reason, you might have proceeded cautiously on account of the state of the national finances. Are you thoroughly satisfied with the state of these finances? I see on every side indications of uneasiness upon that point. You are reducing your indirect taxation, and you have announced that you are going to reduce it still further. Your direct taxation in time of profound peace is on a war level. I do not think this House has forgotten the warning given by my noble friend Lord St. Aldwyn, when he addressed us on this subject last summer. The national liabilities, already colossal, are becoming more colossal still. It is clear, after the speech of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, that you cannot now reduce your Navy Estimates. All those who have paid attention to the working of Mr. Haldane's Territorial Army scheme are deeply convinced that it will cost a great deal more money than was at first supposed; your Civil Service Estimates mount up by leaps and bounds. Is this the moment for assuming a new and immense liability?

The present Chancellor of the Exchequer has taken credit to himself, and I think rightly, for his efforts to reduce the debt of this country. There are many people who would submit to the payment of war taxes in peace time if they felt that thereby the financial condition of the country was being rendered permanently stronger for the future. But to ask them to submit to the continuation of war taxes, and, perhaps, to more than war taxes, in order that this new liability may be rashly and heedlessly assumed is quite another matter altogether. In this case there is no turning back. I am afraid that the step you are asking us to take this year may be fraught with very grave results to the financial stability of this country.

I will not attempt to comment at length upon the long series of measures enumerated in the gracious Speech. There is to be a Licensing Bill, and may I say that we all admired Mr. Asquith's agility of mind when on one and the same afternoon he endeavoured to reassure deputations from the Free Churches, from the Union of Clubs, and from the holders of brewery debentures. But we shall have to get to closer quarters over this question. The country will want to know what are the reasons for which drastic legislation of this kind is required at the present moment. Is intemperance increasing? Has the Act of 1904 failed in its object? I have seen it said that the result of that Act has been to diminish licences at the rate of about 1,000 a year. Then we shall want to know whether you are going to deal fairly and considerately with a trade which, when properly carried on, is not a discreditable trade, and with vested interests which have become vested interests because Parliament and the tribunals of this country have recognised their validity from time to time.

Upon education I will only say this one word. I am full of gratitude to the Government for announcing that their proposals are to take the form of a Bill, because the recent action of the Education Minister has suggested the idea that he considered himself free to dispense with the assistance, not only of the House of Lords, but of the House of Commons also, and by executive action on the part of his own Department to do things not only not authorised by any existing statute, but diametrically opposed to the spirit of the existing law. I do not give up the hope of an amicable settlement. I carry my mind back to the long debates of 1906. In those days there was no great disagreement between the two sides as to the main principles on which we were to proceed. Our complaint was that the Government measure failed altogether to give effect to their own principles, and it was upon that point that we fell out. Let us hope that we may succeed better this time.

I derive a little comfort from another Education Bill also referred to in the Speech—the Bill dealing with University education in Ireland. You will recollect that, when this subject was last dealt with by the Government, the then Chief Secretary, with his foot as it were upon the gangway of the steamer that was to take him to America, divulged the proposal he proposed to lay before Parliament. History repeats itself, for this winter we have had a similarly premature and perhaps useful, revelation of the Government scheme, this time from the mouth of the eminent Provost of Trinity College, Dublin, who had, I suppose, been favoured with a private view of the measure. Dr. Traill was able to state with authority that under the Bill Trinity College Dublin, its constitution and emoluments, were to be absolutely excluded, and he went on to announce that Ireland was to have three Universities, and that they were to have "atmospheres" May we venture to express a hope that, in regard to education in England and Wales, some way may be found of affording these "atmospheres" which you are so eager to concede to Ireland.

There are two other Bills referred to which came before this House in the closing moments of last session and which are to be reintroduced this year. Are these Bills to be reintroduced in the same shape and in the same House? I hope the noble Marquess, the Leader of the House, will listen to my plea when I implore him to give us this year opportunities for discussing these measures which were denied to us last year. We have lately had a very interesting paper describing the numerous varieties of Second Chambers which are to be found in different countries, and I take it upon myself to say that no one of these Second Chambers, no matter what its form or privileges might be, would have been ready to pass the Land Values Bill under the conditions in which the Land Values Bill was presented to us in August last. As to the Small Holdings Bill, the noble Marquess opposite will recollect that there was very general agreement on both sides of the House as to the objects aimed at, and that where we parted company was as to the methods of arriving at those objects. We on this side thought our methods were preferable, and we were able to show that they were very much preferred by the Scottish agriculturalists, and we have reason to know that even on the bench opposite, there are distinguished personages more inclined to our view than to the view of the noble Marquess.

One word more before I sit down. I notice one important omission in the list of legislative proposals submitted to us. I find no reference to any proposal for dealing with the relations of the two Houses of Parliament. I would ask noble Lords opposite whether they are treating the country quite fairly when, in the frequent speeches which they have delivered during the recess, one and all of them harp continually on this theme, one and all of them hold up the House of Lords to ridicule or odium, one and all of them misrepresent its action, without submitting to Parliament the proposals which they intend to put forward for dealing with this great question. I ask the noble Marquess what he and his colleagues are waiting for. They are not waiting for the Report of Lord Rosebery's committee; they profess not to be aware of its existence, and they have refused to take any part in that useful inquiry. Nor are they, it appears, waiting until the House of Lords' cup is full, for the Prime Minister has announced that the cup was full many years ago. If that is true, if the cup has been full all this time, is it not a more just and honourable way of proceeding to approach this subject upon the basis of historical facts calmly reviewed and judicially dealt with, rather than to import all the prejudice which you are importing into it week after week and month after month in your constantly-repeated speeches?

The noble Earl the Lord President, in the same speech to which I referred a moment ago, told us what the functions of the House of Lords were. I do not greatly quarrel with his description. He told us that it was our business to revise, to suspend, and to ask for judgment. Well, my Lords, if you hesitate to deliver your attack upon the House of Lords, I say treat us fairly in the meantime. Give us the opportunities to which we are entitled for revising, suspending, and asking for judgment. Do not treat us again this summer as you treated us when last year you invited us within the space of three weeks at the very end of the session to deal with no less than nine measures of great importance, or when, after a most important Bill had been discussed during an all-night sitting in the House of Commons, you asked us the next day to examine and deal with your dishevelled arguments in the last forty-eight hours of the session. I trust that these things will not occur again this session. And let me say that, if you will arrange the business of the two Houses so that we may have that opportunity to which we are entitled of properly exercising our constitutional functions, if you will meet us upon that point and deal with us considerately, there will be no want of consideration shown you upon this side of the House.

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: My Lords, I associate myself entirely with the opinion which was expressed by my noble friend who has just sat down in regard to the speeches of my two noble friends who moved and seconded the Address. They were speeches marked both by ability and by intimate knowledge of the subjects with which they dealt. The noble mover of the Address has had a long Parliamentary experience and a very great experience in the conduct of commercial and industrial undertakings and it was a great advantage to your Lordships' House to have heard the opinions that he entertained. The noble seconder of the Address, on the other hand, is a young man, but he has shown the greatest promise of becoming an effective debater in this House, and he has also shown a grasp of commercial affairs and a clearness of opinion in regard to questions of that kind, which, though natural in one who fills the great position in the shipping world which is filled by my noble friend, yet was remarkable in one of his age. My noble friend opposite said he hoped those two noble Lords would frequently take part in our debates. I hope so too, but I am bound to say, having for many years entertained those hopes in regard to predecessors of my noble friends who have addressed this House for the first time, that they have been very rarely fulfilled, and I have too often had cause to lament that those who gave great promise on an occasion of this kind took very little further part in our discussions. I hope that may not be the case with my noble friends behind me, to whom on behalf of the Government I tender our warmest thanks.

I share with my noble friends and with the noble Marquess opposite the satisfaction with which they regard the recent visit of the German Emperor and his Imperial Consort. These Royal visits show to foreign rulers the hospitable nature of the English people and their readiness to welcome those who come to them as friends; and they afford opportunities to that great diplomatist the King for the purpose of the discussion of public affairs. The connection between the German Emperor and His Majesty the King is dynastic. But there is another connection between Germany and this country—the connection of a common race origin; and these visits afford us an opportunity of offering to the German people the strongest testimony we can give of our most earnest desire to live on the most friendly terms with them.

With regard to the death of the King of Sweden, I would like to make one addition to the remarks which fell from Lord Airedale. His late Majesty was not only an amiable and thoroughly constitutional monarch, he was also a great literary character. He was celebrated for his talents in poetry, and I believe he wrote a poem called "An Ode to the Baltic," which has become one of the national songs of the people of Sweden.

As to the Anglo-Russian Convention, I have no objection to offer to what the noble Marquess has said; on the contrary, I thank him for his remarks. I am glad the noble Marquess approves of the efforts which we made to enter into such a Convention. I do not complain of the intimation which the noble Marquess appeared to give that the provisions of that Convention might form the subject of discussion in this House. I think it is very desirable that that should be so. So far as it relates to Persia it appears to me that we have already had remarkable proof of the advantages which we shall derive from the Convention. We all know the unhappy condition of Persia at the present time. There have been times when in such a critical state of affairs in that country British and Russian envoys would have competed against each other, jealous and eager to gain a small success and to add slightly to the prestige, as they would have considered it, of their respective countries, and out of such a state of things very grave and serious complications might have arisen. But throughout these disturbances in Persia the British and Russian Governments have acted together, and if the extreme evils of a different state of things have been avoided, it was due to that portion of the Convention which has been lately concluded.

With respect to Afghanistan, the noble Marquess opposite knows that there have been for many years various attempts to introduce some system of intercommunication between Russian and Afghan authorities on the frontier. As the Russian and the Afghan frontiers are now conterminous, it is inevitable that in that close neighbourhood there should arise difficulties which it would be advantageous to deal with locally. I hope that under this Convention we shall have arranged a means by which that may be accomplished, and in doing so I think we shall have taken a very reasonable step in the direction of making the peculiar relations which exist between Afghanistan and this country compatible with the changed conditions of the Afghan frontier. The treaty excludes all communication upon political subjects between Russia and Afghanistan, and the treaty, as it seems to me, is peculiarly advantageous to the Ameer of Afghanistan, because it gives him security, not only for the recognition by us of the freedom from interference of his internal government, but it also secures him a similar guarantee from the Government of Russia. For the first time there is given in the solemn form of a treaty a recognition that Afghanistan is within the bounds of British influence, and that Russia has no right whatever to interfere politically therein. I look upon this treaty, therefore, as having gained a great and important advantage for Russia, Great Britain, and Afghanistan.

Your Lordships will, perhaps, like to know what has happened with reference to His Majesty the Ameer in this matter. The treaty was signed on 31st August, and on 10th September Lord Minto informed the Ameer by letter of the conclusion of this Convention, and of its character. At that time the Ameer was absent from Kabul, and, being absent, he on 29th September wrote to say he was away and would consider the matter on his return. He has returned now to Kabul, and the Government hope very shortly to receive his approval of the Convention, which is eminently advantageous to him. Orientals are proverbially slow in these matters, and it is not improbable that he may take a somewhat long time for consideration; but the British native agent at Kabul is coming away on private leave very shortly, and Lord Minto has instructed him at his interview with the Ameer when he leaves Kabul to urge upon him to send an answer as soon as he can. I have no doubt that if the answer is not received Lord Minto will take the necessary steps to make some intimation on the subject, but I have no reason to believe or to suppose that the Ameer will not in the end welcome this Convention, and be very glad that it should come into operation.

In regard to the Treaty between France, Germany, and Russia for preserving the integrity of Norway, I have only to say that the Government have received today a telegram stating that the King of Norway has ratified the Treaty. I believe there have been rumours that the British Government in some way refused to entertain or opposed some desire of the Swedish Government in regard to this matter. That is not so. I am informed that no representations of the Swedish Government have been shut out or prevented from being considered by any action of His Majesty's Government.

I now pass to the Hague Conference. I think that there is in some quarters a tendency to underrate the effect and utility of that Conference. I do not at all agree that it has not been productive of good. I think that much good has come from it, and I believe that it has laid a solid foundation upon which an advance can be made in the interests of peace on a similar occasion in the future. My noble friend spoke of the desire entertained by the British Government that there should have resulted from the Conference some substantial step towards the reduction of armaments. My Lords, there is no one who will deny that if that tremendous burden which presses upon the shoulders of the people of the world at the present time for military and naval expenditure could by mutual understanding have been lessened, a great and important work would have been accomplished. My right hon. friend Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman and my right hon. friend Sir Edward Grey thought that, in the interests of humanity, it was desirable that that question should be brought to the notice of the Powers of the world, and they took every means in their power to that end. But the subject naturally is a very difficult one—that I do not for one moment dispute—and it did not commend itself to some of the Great Powers as one suitable for consideration on this occasion at The Hague; consequently it was not there discussed, and no decision was come to. But I venture to believe that, having placed upon record the desire of the British Government in that way, we have taken a not unimportant step in the interests of peace.

I quite agree with my noble friend who has just sat down that the establishment of the International Court of Appeal in prize cases is a matter involving considerations of great importance. I believe that the establishment of such a tribunal will be of very great value. My noble friend Lord Nunburnholme, speaking with his great knowledge of shipping matters, pointed out how greatly the shipping interest would be relieved if this Court could be set up. But I quite agree with my noble friend the noble Marquess opposite in thinking it a matter which requires very careful consideration, and therefore it is that His Majesty's Government propose to assemble in the course of the ensuing summer or autumn, a Conference in London for the purpose of dealing with those questions of international law.

The next paragraph in the Speech is a very sad one, because it refers to the present condition of the Macedonian vilayets. There is no concealment in that paragraph. The Government have advised His Majesty, and His Majesty has been pleased to use expressions of unusual strength in a document of this kind as to the present state of things in Macedonia. I can assure the House that the Government will do their utmost to bring the terrible state of things which exists there to an early and peaceful conclusion. But you must always remember that it is not impossible that this country might, by closing the Macedonian question, only succeed in opening the Turkish question. That is the great difficulty which lies before us. We believe that it is the first principle which ought to guide us that we should to the last moment endeavour to maintain the Concert of Europe in regard to this painful question. Every effort will be used on our part. We shall be prepared to take the first move in regard to the matter, but we do believe that there lies involved in these considerations questions which might threaten the peace of the world, and if they were to give rise to such a catastrophe as war between this country and Turkey, that must inevitably end in a European war, which would be the greatest evil probably in these days that the world could encounter.

With regard to the Congo State, all those who know the character of the Belgian Government and Parliament must have every confidence in the wisdom and justice of that Parliament, and we earnestly hope that they may be able to come to some arrangement with regard to this question, which will relieve those who signed the Act of Berlin from the responsibility which may otherwise fall upon them with regard to the engagements of that Act. I share the pleasure my noble friend has expressed in regard to the consent of the Government of Newfoundland and of the United States to refer the disputes between them to arbitration. I was very well prepared for the approval which the noble Marquess expressed on that subject, because he has done a great deal to further the cause of arbitration. I believe my noble friend has signed, or caused to be signed, more treaties of arbitration than any previous Foreign Minister, and he may, therefore, be accounted as one of the foremost friends of that great mode of settling public disputes.

Coming to the difficulties between Canada and Japan, differences of a very delicate character, I am glad to say that they have been brought to a conclusion, and that instruments have been signed settling, as I trust, the matter in a perfectly satisfactory manner. I think my noble friend expressed his satisfaction with the course which had been taken by the Japanese Government, but we must not overlook the course which has been pursued by the Canadian Government.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I ventured to express my appreciation of the conduct of both Governments.

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: I associate myself in that appreciation. I think the Canadian Government have shown in this matter a degree of statesmanship, moderation, and wisdom which deserve the highest praise. I now pass to say a word about old-age pensions. Of course, I cannot go into any discussion of the coming Budget, nor into any discussion of the proposals which my right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer may have to make with reference to the matter. That he will have proposals to make is clear from the paragraph in the Speech. But I could not help recollecting, when I was listening to what the noble Marquess was saying, that there were many noble Lords sitting behind him who have been at times accustomed to tell us that, if we will only adopt a tariff-reform policy, one of its first effects will be to enable the granting of old-age pensions. They cannot be such very bad things when so many of the friends of the noble Marquess have advocated them as one of the natural and desirable results of their detestable policy.

My noble friend spoke about the state of things in Ireland and I understand it is intended to prolong this debate beyond the usual period, adjourning it till to-morrow so that the subject may be fully discussed. His Majesty's Government are not afraid of a discussion of that kind, and they will be prepared to meet the charges which may be brought against them. I was very glad to hear my noble friend say that he did not associate himself with some of the language which has been used with respect to my right hon. friend Mr. Birrell. I do not think that portions of that language are creditable to those who used them. I do not think that the mode of maintaining law and order in Ireland is to charge, and to charge untruly, those who are engaged in administering the law. My right hon. friend will, perhaps, make his answer to those charges to-night, and I shall leave him to deal with his own defence. But, when my noble friend says that the Government have neglected their duty, that they ought to have done this, that, and the other, what is it the noble Marquess definitely means? I suppose he means that we ought to have put in force some, at least, of the provisions of the Crimes Act.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: Certainly.

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: I would ask the noble Marquess whether he expected that we should be eager to do that. Did not he know the views that we had taken in respect to that legislation in the past? Did not he remember that twenty years ago there was recorded in the House a protest against that Act, a very weighty and argued document, signed by some of the foremost men in the Liberal Party in this House at that time, stating clearly and unhesitatingly the doctrines which we have held on this subject? I have very little belief in legislation coercion. For more than 100 years Ireland has, not constantly, but from time to time, with lucid intervals when efforts have been made at reform, been under the operation of Coercion Acts of one kind and another. I do not think they have been successful. I do not think they have resulted in increasing respect for the law in that country, and I hold, in the phrase used by my late right hon. friend Mr. Bright, that "force is no remedy." We look to see what we can do to meet this difficulty in another way. We are told that it is wrong to speak of remedying grievances unless you have first absolutely established perfect order in Ireland. I do not agree with that. I believe you should seek to remedy grievances, if any grievances exist, and that we are bound, certainly by all our traditions and opinions, to try that remedy before we look for any other means of dealing with the present condition of affairs.

It is not true to say that His Majesty's Government are indifferent to the grievous state of things that have existed in Ireland of late. We may have our remedy; noble Lords opposite may have theirs. Noble Lords opposite may be so enamoured of the Crimes Act that they may think it is the obvious thing that men who have protested throughout the whole of their political lives against a policy of that kind should adopt it out of hand. We are not inclined to do that, and we have every reason for thinking that we can find a remedy of another kind in the fact that the Congested Districts Board, in their Report for 1895, said they could not deal with the questions submitted for their administration unless they had the power of compulsory purchase of lands in certain districts. Nothing was done upon that recommendation; no notice was taken of it. Whether that absence of notice has anything to do with what has subsequently happened in Ireland I do not say; but I do say that, having that recommendation before us, we are bound, as we intend, to act upon that advice if we can obtain the consent of Parliament. My noble friend rather cast ridicule upon us because we said we wanted to govern Ireland by Irish ideas. The author of that sentiment, Lord Dudley, sits on the Front Bench opposite, and I think it is a sentiment which did him great honour. It is a sentiment to which I entirely subscribe, but why my noble friend thought fit to deprive Lord Dudley of the distinction I confess I am quite unable to understand.

It is quite true that His Majesty's Government do intend to introduce a Bill to amend the licensing law. My noble friend said he did not know exactly why; he did not think the Act of 1904 had in any way failed. But my noble friend will well remember that that Act was pretty fully discussed in this House, and that there were many Members of the House, including a full contingent from the bench of Bishops, who were in favour of the Amendment of that Act in many respects. I think some of those right rev. Prelates were not quite so bold in pressing their opinions to a division as I should have desired, but at the same time they did very distinctly intimate their opinion that, in some material respects, that Bill would require amendment.

As regards the Elementary Education Bill, my noble friend said he was very glad that my right hon. friend Mr. McKenna had on this occasion thought fit to apply for an Act of Parliament, and he said that my right hon. friend had been in the habit of doing things which were inconsistent with the law. Well, my Lords, we will discuss that whenever my noble friend likes. Whenever any noble Lord brings forward in this House the question of the legality of any of the acts of my right hon. friend we shall be quite prepared to enter into a discussion upon that matter. My noble friend did not say much about the Housing Bill and for what is called town planning. I believe that to be a very important and a very urgent subject. I am not fond of talking about things not being Party questions, for I have often observed that when men get up and say this or that is not a Party question, and that they are going to consider it from a perfectly independent point of view, they generally make the strongest possible Party speech. Therefore I will merely say that this is a very important question relating to a matter which will have the sympathy of noble Lords on both sides of the House.

As to the question of University education in Ireland, I hope it will be possible to come to some conclusion in the present session. It is a matter in which the people of Ireland have a great and definite grievance. Mr. Balfour recognised it when he said that he had difficulty in defending the Union while this grievance was unredressed. There are only two more Bills alluded to—those relating to Scottish land and valuation. I can assure your Lordships that it is the earnest desire of the Government that those Bills should be sent up for your Lordships' consideration at the earliest possible moment; and every effort will be made by the Prime Minister to get them through the House of Commons at a time when this House will have an ample opportunity of considering them. I welcome the statement of my noble friend that these measures will receive consideration and discussion when they come up to this House. I believe I have gone through all the topics touched upon by my noble friend. The list of measures is long, and the labours of the two Houses are likely to be arduous and prolonged; but the business of the country is so great and growing, both in administration and legislation, that it makes increasing demands on all concerned. I hope and believe that so far as this House is concerned your Lordships will not refuse to incur even private inconvenience in order to take your part in these necessary labours.

VISCOUNT RIDLEY: My Lords, before the House rises I desire briefly to call attention to yet another omission from the gracious Speech from the Throne. It is not that I am disposed to complain of the insufficiency of the fare which is set before your Lordships to consume during the next few months. As the noble Marquess observed in his closing remarks, it is likely to provide sufficient occupation for this House and for the other for many weeks to come. But although the two Houses of Parliament may be fully employed with the measures that have been promised us, I cannot help expressing some surprise that there is no mention whatever in the Speech of the great and growing problem of unemployment. I do not desire to exaggerate that problem. It is true, and always must be true, that the unemployable will be among the unemployed, but His Majesty's Government thought fit last year and the year before to pay especial attention to the problem of unemployment. The previous Government made grants of public money for the administration of the Unemployed Workmen Act which the present Government have continued, and many of the friends and allies of His Majesty's Government have never failed to urge upon their immediate attention the problem of unemployment as being one of grave national urgency.

What I desire to ask of the Government in this connection is: What is the state of affairs now which makes it unnecessary to refer to that problem when it was necessary to treat it so seriously last year and the year before? What has happened to make the problem less serious? Why do His Majesty's advisers pay no attention whatever to it? It is, as a matter of fact, true, that in many of the important manufacturing towns of the north subscriptions are being got up for unemployed funds, and that other subscription lists are being opened to feed the children of unemployed men and women. It is the fact that in December last the returns of unemployed in trade unions were over 6 per cent. as compared with

4·9 per cent. in December a year ago, when His Majesty's Government thought fit to notice the question. It is true also that the increase in the number of paupers and the increase in the number of emigrants from this country has gone on steadily, and every indication as regards the unemployed is more serious than last year, when His Majesty's Government thought fit to take serious notice of it.

There is another feature to which I would draw attention. Some of your Lordships may have noticed a report upon the Poor Law statistics of the metropolis, and perhaps some noble Lords may have observed this very remarkable feature, that it is not so much the increase in the number of paupers to which these returns draw attention, although that is significant enough, but the increase in the number of able-bodied paupers. The new feature in workhouse statistics is the increased number of recipients of Poor Law relief who are neither old nor ill. That is a very grave and serious feature. It is not the old and the unemployable so much as the middle-aged and the employable who show a tendency to increase in the workhouses of the metropolis. And it is not during the winter months—so the reports proceed—that these increases are most noticeable. The remarkable feature in the increases is that they are during the summer months and among the able-bodied and the employable. At this very moment there is a march of the unemployed proceeding towards London. The problem is exactly the same as it was a year ago, if not aggravated in its intensity by every set of statistics to which it is possible to allude.

Why is it that His Majesty's Government have paid no attention whatever to this problem? Is it because they conceive that the measures which they have passed during the past year have relieved or mitigated the problem? Do they imagine that the getting rid of thousands of men of the Regular Army and throwing them on the labour market is going to relieve the problem of unemployment? Do they imagine that reducing their works at Woolwich and diminishing work in the dockyards is going to help to relieve this problem? Do they imagine that giving contracts abroad in increasing quantities is going to help the solution of this question in this country? And do they imagine that the growing tendency of capital to find its way abroad is going to help employment in these islands?

There is one figure I would like to trouble your Lordships with in regard to the increase of the amount of capital going abroad. I take the return of the Income Tax Commissioners, and I find that the average growth per year during the past twenty-one years of ascertained income coming into this country from foreign investments has been £1,134,000 per year—that is, an average increase of £1,134,000 each year over the previous year during the past twenty years. But for the last year in respect of which we have the complete figures of the Income Tax Commissioners, which, curiously enough, is the first year during which the present Government held office, the increase was not an average one of £1,134,000, but £7,837,000, which is an increase of six times as much as the average for the previous twenty years. At 5 per cent. that sum, capitalised, represents something like £150,000,000 of capital gone out of the country in the year. It cannot be argued that that has improved employment in this country. It is obvious that money invested in works abroad does not give employment to workmen in these islands. This is not the moment to press upon the attention of the House the only way in which I believe unemployment can be cured—namely, by tariff reform—but I think the reason why His Majesty's Government are afraid of mentioning the problem is that they are afraid of the only possible solution.

With regard to dealing with unemployment by tariff bargaining, I have read that His Majesty's Government have negotiated a tariff treaty with the United States whereby American commercial travellers are permitted to bring into this country samples of cocoa, wines, and so forth free, and in return for that the Government of the United States are to remit 25 per cent. off articles such as pictures and art treasures exported from this country to America. That is no doubt an instance of a tariff arrangement with another country, but an instance where His Majesty's Government, in endeavouring to apply tariff reform, have applied it in a way in which it is of the least possible benefit to this country. They make an arrangement whereby they admit on easy terms samples of goods which are going to compete with workmen in this country, and in return get from the United States a concession by means of which rich people may have greater facilities for removing our art treasures to another country.

If the various measures which the Government have taken during the past year have done nothing to relieve unemployment, and if the figures show that the problem is more acute than when the Government took office, what is it they promise to do in His Majesty's Speech? You will not find one single measure which is directly calculated to do anything to assist this question. You find various measures mentioned dealing with housing, with land questions, and with the protection of children, all of which measures may be of great benefit to the country, but, if passed, and if useful, will at their best only ministrate to the comfort of the employed and not find employment for the unemployed. Another education Bill is mentioned. It is true that that measure may provide employment for a certain number of school teachers, and, if you create a Welsh Department, occupation for a few more lawyers; and the Bills for Scotland may lead to more employment for surveyors. If you take old-age pensions, they will give extra comfort to the aged, but will not relieve unemployment. If you look to the Licensing Bill that will probably increase unemployment, especially if it is to asssist in getting rid of the humble occupation of barmaid.

Not only do His Majesty's Government in all the measures they foreshadow make no proposal whatever to deal with this unemployed question, whether by tariff reform or otherwise, but they take no notice whatever of what is undoubtedly a great aggravation to the question of unemployment at this moment—that is to say, the increase in the price of all the necessaries of domestic consumption. I allude more particularly to the price of bread, which, as we have been told on Cobdenite platforms, is a necessary of life. We must remember that cheap bread was promised by the reformers of 1846. It was one of the great attractions to the manufacturers and one of the arguments in favour of adopting the system of free imports. It was said that bread would be so cheap that wages could be lowered; and at the last election it was declared that by voting for the Liberal Party you were voting for the big loaf. Do not let me say that the Liberal Government have wickedly said that the price of the loaf shall be 6d. when it used to be 4½d., but they promised the country the big loaf, and though the country may be having that loaf it is paying a bigger price for it. I do say that the Liberal Party promised the country that by voting for the present system they were voting for a cheap loaf, and I further say that facts have contradicted them, that the free trade system does not guarantee to this country under existing circumstances the cheap loaf, and that a bargain with our Colonies on the lines of preference would have a greater prospect of permanently maintaining the loaf at a reasonably cheap price.

I do not desire to labour that particular point at this moment. There will be other opportunities of pressing home what I and others conceive to be the real remedy for unemployment. What I rose to call attention to, and what I think will probably very seriously be called in question in other places, is the total absence of any indication on the part of His Majesty's Government that they have taken into consideration this question, which they themselves have declared again and again was a serious and pressing problem, and which, since they made those declarations as to its seriousness, they have in the various measures which they have attempted to bring forward done nothing whatever to relieve or mitigate.

*THE EARL OF MAYO: My Lords, it is not my wish to detain your Lordships for more than a few moments. I do not rise to complain of any omission from the gracious Speech, but to draw attention to the fact that this is the first time the Congo question has been mentioned in the Speech from the Throne. I am glad to see in that Speech these words—

> "My Government are fully aware of the great anxiety felt with regard to the treatment of the native population in the Congo State. Their sole desire is to see the government of that State humanely administered in accordance with the spirit of the Berlin Act."

Speaking for the Congo Reform Association, which has worked hard in regard to this question for many years, it is gratifying to find that at last some recognition is given by the Government to the representations which have been made with regard to the horrible way in which the Congo natives have been treated and the way in which they have been forced to labour. The Berlin Act should not only be enforced in that respect, but if Belgium takes over the Congo I trust it will also be enforced in respect of the trade of the nations signatory to the Berlin Act. That, perhaps, is not quite as important, but nearly as important, as the question of the natives. I hope that later in the session we shall have a discussion upon this subject. Meanwhile nothing will be said by myself as one of the members of the Congo Reform Association or by my colleagues which will impede in any way the negotiations which are going on between Belgium and King Leopold. The treaty of cession has now been formulated and the question is being debated in the Chamber. The noble Marquess expressed the hope that when the negotiations were completed the Powers would be relieved of their responsibility, but the responsibility of the Powers will end only when the atrocities and forced labour cease. I do not wish to press the noble Lord the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs for an answer to my remarks; but, in speaking of Africa, I would remind him that there was a Commission upon the disease of sleeping sickness, and I should like to know what has happened, as this question affects not only the natives of the Congo, but those of a great part of our East African Possessions.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord FITZMAURICE): My Lords, I not only have no complaint to make of my noble friend for having mentioned the subject of the Congo in this debate, but on the contrary, I am grateful to him for having so early, and also, if I may say so, so adequately recognised the importance of the fact that the Congo question and the ill-treatment of the natives on the Congo have been mentioned in the King's Speech. That is, as he most truly said, a very important thing. It is quite true that both in this House and in the other House of Parliament of late years—indeed, I may say every year—there have been long and important debates in which the ill-treatment of the natives and the violation of the Berlin Act, not only in regard to the treatment of the natives, but also in many other important particulars, have over and over again been dwelt upon. But the matter has now been placed on record in a great public document, the King's Speech.

I hope that, to a certain extent, this may be an answer—not, perhaps, as complete as some would wish—to those who, moved by a not unnatural impatience, have during the last few months complained of His Majesty's Government's not having taken strong action with regard to the Congo. I entirely share the feelings of sorrow which those gentlemen have expressed in regard to the state of things existing on the Congo. But an Association, however large and important, does not bear the responsibilities of State. In the case of the Foreign Office, every word which falls from the lips of right my hon. friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, or which is written by his pen, is of the greatest gravity, and clearly every step has to be taken with the greatest care. I am convinced that everything that has happened since last year has shown that the course which was indicated by Sir Edward Grey in another place and by myself here has been wise. We submitted to Parliament that any rash attempt to interfere in the course of the negotiations between the Sovereign of the Congo State and the Belgian Parliament would be as likely to do harm as good.

Those negotiations, I told the House in June last, would, I hoped, have entered upon an important phase by the autumn. That statement has been fully justified. I never said, nor did Sir Edward Grey in another place, that a treaty would have been actually settled and signed by that time. That would have been an absurd hope to hold out. But what I did say was that these negotiations would, I believed, by that time have entered on a stage showing a great advance, and that they would then probably proceed to a satisfactory conclusion. The general course of events is, I think, fairly well known to your Lordships, but I may say that a certain unexpected element of delay was introduced by the lamented death of the Belgian Prime Minister, an eminent man whose loss his country has every reason to deplore; but now that a successor has been found to his onerous office, I have reason to know that the negotiations have been resumed and they appear to be progressing, if slowly, in the direction we all desire.

My noble friend has alluded to another question which is very germane to this one. He has asked for information in regard to the investigations into the question of sleeping sickness, which so greatly affects British territories in Africa. I certainly had hoped that by this time it would have been my good fortune to have been able to tell your Lordships that the Convention in regard to this question, which was practically agreed upon last summer, had been signed. The International Conference which met in London upon sleeping sickness and tropical diseases, arrived unanimously at certain conclusions, but as the delegates who came from foreign States had no power to sign a treaty, the Conference was adjourned. The Conference was to have met again in November, but the German Government, most naturally, desired to send as one of their delegates that most eminent scientist, Dr. Koch, whose name is more associated than that of any living man with tropical diseases. Dr. Koch was then in Africa, and the Conference agreed to adjourn till January, but at the last moment it was found that that date was not convenient to another of the Powers, and we consented to a further adjournment. I am glad, however, to have this opportunity of explaining that the delays were in no manner owing to anything which took place on this side of the water, but were entirely due to our desire to find a date convenient to the other Powers interested in this question. I am now able to say that I hope the Conference will reassemble in March, and I have every hope also that a Convention will then be signed.

I am not inclined to think that your Lordships would desire that I should attempt to follow the noble Viscount opposite and discuss the large question of tariff reform and unemployed labour. I only desire to state that it would be a very great mistake to suppose that the mere fact that this question is not mentioned in His Majesty's Speech is to be taken in any way as showing a want of interest or of appreciation of the importance of the subject on the part of the Government. Clearly there are several alternatives before the Government in this matter. A Bill could be brought forward, depending, no doubt, very largely upon what the Chancellor of the Exchequer could allow to be done as part of his general scheme of finance in connection with the question of unemployed; or the existing Unemployed Workmen Act could be continued for a short period by inclusion in the Expiring Laws Continuance Bill. I am not saying that either of those courses has been decided upon, or adopted, or rejected. I am only desirous of saying that the question is one of the importance of which the Government are fully conscious. So far as the noble Viscount, Lord Ridley, is concerned, I am inclined to think that he had already been answered by his own leader, because my noble friend who leads the Opposition found fault with the Government for dealing with the question of old-age pensions instead of waiting for the Report of the Poor Law Commission presided over by Lord George Hamilton. Now it appears to me that if the argument of the noble Marquess the Leader of the Opposition is good against us in regard to old-age pensions, it is still more true against the noble Viscount in regard to the unemployed problem.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: My Lords, as there are many peers from Ireland who desire to discuss fully the condition of affairs in that country, I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Moved, "That the debate be adjourned."—[*The Marquess of Londonderry.*]

On Question, Motion agreed to.

EARL OF CLANWILLIAM.

Petition of Arthur Vescy, Earl of Clanwilliam in the Peerage of Ireland, claiming a right to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland; read, and referred to the Lord Chancellor to consider and report thereupon to the House.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS (RECESS).

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the following Papers, having been commanded to be presented to this House by His Majesty, had been so presented on the following dates by delivery to the Clerk of the Parliaments, pursuant to Standing Order No. CXI., viz.—

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

I. Official correspondence relating to the payment of teachers' salaries in Merionethshire. (August 29.)

II. Administrative County of Kent: Endowed Charities (Elementary Education)—Report made to the Board of Education in the result of an inquiry into endowments, subject to the provisions of the Charitable Trusts Acts, 1853 to 1894, and appropriated in whole or in part to purposes of elementary education in the administrative county of Kent, or in any part thereof. (September 26.)

III. Special Reports on Educational Subjects—

1. Volume 18. Education and training of the French primary school teacher. (October 11.)

2. Volume 19. School training for the home duties of women: Part III. Domestic training of girls in Germany and Austria. (December 20.)

3. Volume 21. School excursions and vacation schools. (December 30.)

IV. Regulations providing for special grants in aid of certain local education authorities in England and Wales, in 1907–1908. (October 19.)

V. General report on instruction and training of pupil teachers in Wales (including Monmouthshire.) (November 11.)

VI. Report of the Board of Education for the year 1906–1907. (December 20.)

VII. Building regulations for secondary schools and pupil teacher centres, being principles to be observed in designing and fitting up new buildings, rules as to construction, etc., and certain requirements as to plans, specifications, and estimates. (December 30.)

VIII. Reports from those Universities and University Colleges in Great Britain which participate in the Parliamentary Grant, 1907.

IX. Statistics of Public Education in England and Wales, 1905–1906–1907 (January 23.)

TREATY SERIES.

No. 27 (1907). International Sanitary Convention; signed at Paris, 3rd December, 1903. (Ratifications deposited at Paris, 6th April, 1907.)

No. 28 (1907). Declaration between the United Kingdom and Portugal respecting Boundaries in Central Africa (Barotseland); signed at London, 12th August, 1903.

No. 29 (1907). Accession of Ecuador to the Convention signed at Geneva 22nd August, 1864, for the amelioration of the condition of the wounded in armies in the field, 3rd August, 1907. (August 30.)

No. 30 (1907). Accession of Venezuela to the Convention signed at Geneva, 6th July, 1906, for the amelioration of the condition of the wounded and sick in armies in the field, 8th July, 1907. (September 12.)

No. 31 (1907). Agreement between the United Kingdom and Italy respecting the importation of drugs and medical preparations, 9th July, 1907. (September 16.)

No. 32 (1907). Accession of the United Kingdom to the Declarations signed at The Hague, 29th July, 1899, respecting (1) expanding bullets; (2) asphyxiating gases; 30th August, 1907. (September 25.)

No. 33 (1907). Agreement between the United Kingdom and the United States of America respecting protection of patents in Morocco, 24th June, 1907. (September 28.)

No. 34 (1907). Convention between the United Kingdom and Russia, relating to Persia, Afghanistan, and Thibet; signed at St. Petersburg, 31st August, 1907. (Ratifications exchanged at St. Petersburg, 23rd. September, 1907.) (October 4.)

No. 35 (1907). Exchange of Notes establishing a *modus vivendi* between the United Kingdom and the United States of America with regard to the Newfoundland Fisheries, 4th and 6th September, 1907. (October 8.)

No. 36 (1907). Convention between the United Kingdom and Belgium for the exchange of money orders; signed at London, 17th September, 1907. (Ratifications exchanged at London, 5th October, 1907). (October 15.)

No. 37 (1907). Agreement between the United Kingdom and Sweden respecting the estates of deceased seamen, 5th October, 1907. (October 19.)

No. 38 (1907). Accession of Turkey to the Conventions signed at Geneva, 6th July, 1906, for the amelioration of the conditions of the wounded and sick in armies in the field, 24th August, 1907. (November 4.)

No. 39 (1907). Accessions, etc. of Foreign States to various International Treaty Engagements.

No. 40 (1907). Accession of Nicaragua to the Declarations, signed at The Hague 29th July, 1899, respecting (1) expanding bullets; (2) asphyxiating gases; 11th October, 1907. (November 15.)

No. 41 (1907). Agreement between the United Kingdom and France supplementary to Money Order Convention of 21st September, 1887; signed at Paris, 30th June, 1906. (Ratifications exchanged at Paris, 23rd October, 1907.)

No. 42 (1907). Convention between the United Kingdom and France for the exchange of money orders between the United Kingdom and various French colonies; signed at Paris, 30th June, 1906. (Ratifications exchanged at Paris, 23rd October, 1907.)

No. 43 (1907). Accessions of British Colonies, etc., to the Treaty of Friendship, Commerce, and Navigation between the United Kingdom and Nicaragua; signed at Managua, 28th July, 1905 (*see* Treaty Series, No. 12 (1906)). (November 27.)

No. 44 (1907). Agreement between the United Kingdom and the United States of America respecting (1) commercial travellers' samples entering the United Kingdom; (2) import duties on British works of art entering the United States; signed at London, 19th November, 1907. (December 16.)

No. 45 (1907). Agreement between the United Kingdom and France respecting commercial travellers' samples; signed at Paris, 23rd October, 1907. (December 20.)

No. 46 (1907). International Convention respecting the liquor traffic in Africa; signed at Brussels, 3rd November, 1906. (December 30.)

No. 1 (1908). Commercial Convention, Protocol, and Declaration between the United Kingdom and Bulgaria; signed at Sofia, 9th December, 1905. (Ratifications exchanged at Sofia, 26th November, 1907.)

No. 2 (1908). Agreement additional to the Commercial Convention between the United Kingdom and Egypt of 29th October, 1889; signed at Cairo 16th December, 1907. (January 24.)

COLONIES.

I. (ANNUAL).

No. 536. Gambia (Report for 1906). (August 31.)

No. 537. British Central Africa Protectorate (Report for 1906–1907). (September 19.)

No. 538. Bechuanaland Protectorate (Report for 1906–1907). (October 8.)

No. 539. Leeward Islands (Report for 1906–1907). (October 15.)

No. 540. Straits Settlements (Report for 1906). (October 17.)

No. 541. Turks and Caicos Islands (Report for 1906). (October 18.)

No. 542. Somaliland Protectorate (Report for 1906–1907). (October 21.)

No. 543. Bahamas (Report for 1906–1907). (October 22.)

No. 544. Barbados (Report for 1906–1907). (October 22.)

No. 545. Trinidad and Tobago (Report for 1906–1907). (October 26.)

No. 546. Grenada (Report for 1906–1907). (October 28.)

No. 547. Mauritius (Report for 1906). (October 29.)

No. 548. Fiji (Report for 1906). (November 19.)

No. 549. Jamaica (Report for 1906–1907). (November 27.)

No. 550. British Guiana (Report for 1906–1907). (December 2.)

No. 551. Northern Nigeria (Report for 1906–1907). (December 6.)

No. 552. British Honduras (Report for 1906). (December 19.)

No. 553. St. Lucia (Report for 1906–1907.) (January 10.)

II. (MISCELLANEOUS).

No. 42. Ceylon (Report on the results of the mineral survey in 1905–1906). (September 23.)

No. 43. Caicos Islands (Report with special reference to the further development of the sisal industry). (October 26.)

No. 44. East Africa Protectorate (Report on Survey Department, by Major E. H. Hills, R.E., C.M.G., dated 21st February, 1907). (November 4.)

No. 45. East Africa Protectorate (Report relating to the geology of the East Africa Protectorate, by Mr. H. Brantwood Muff, B.A., of the Geological Survey of Great Britain.) (January 27.)

HISTORICAL MANUSCRIPTS (ROYAL COMMISSION).

I. Seventeenth Report of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts. (August 31.)

II. Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Marquis of Bath, preserved at Longleat, Wiltshire: Volume III. (Prior Papers). (December 11.)

PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES).

Report of the Commissioners of Prisons and the Directors of Convict Prisons, with Appendices, for the Year ended 31st March, 1907. (September 3.)

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND).

I. Appendix (Section III.) to the Annual Report of the Commissioners, for the Year 1906. (September 4.)

II. Appendix (Section I.) to the Annual Report of the Commissioners, for the Year 1906–1907. (December 18.)

III. Appendix (Section II.) to the Annual Report of the Commissioners, for the Year 1906–1907. (January 22.)

TRADE REPORTS.

I. ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3917. Turkey (Damascus).

No. 3918. Belgium. (September 5.)

No. 3919. Turkey (Tripoli).

No. 3920. Italy (Leghorn). (September 9.)

No. 3921. Turkey (Smyrna).

No. 3922. Brazil (Pernambuco). (September 12.)

No. 3923. Persia (Isaphan and Yezd).

No. 3924. Guatemala (Trade and Finances). (September 13.)

No. 3925. Muscat.

No. 3926. Italy (Florence). (September 14.)

No. 3927. United States (Savannah).

No. 3928. Portugal (Angola). (September 20.)

No. 3929. China (Chefoo). (September 26.)

No. 3930. France (Madagascar.)

No. 3931. China (Swatow).

No. 3932. China (Mengtzu). (September 28.)

No. 3933. United States (Agriculture of States of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho). (October 17.)

No. 3934. China (Kiungchow (Hoihow)). (October 22.)

No. 3935. France (Algeria).

No. 3936. Germany (Trade and Agriculture of Bavaria for 1906 and part of 1907). (October 24.)

No. 3937. Spain (Malaga).

No. 3938. Siam (Bangkok). (October 25.)

No. 3939. Roumania (Constantza). October 29.)

No. 3940. Zanzibar.

No. 3941. France (Foreign Trade for 1906 and first half of 1907). (November 1.)

No. 3942. Japan (Kobe). (November 9.)

No. 3943. China (Foreign Trade). (November 13.)

No. 3944. Bahrain Islands. (November 16.)

No. 3945. Netherlands (Finances). (December 4.)

No. 3946. Ecuador (Trade and Finances.)

No. 3947. Austria-Hungary(Finances). (December 10.)

No. 3948. Netherlands (Amsterdam). (December 18.)

No. 3949. Bulgaria. (December 23.)

No. 3950. Sweden (Finances, 1905–1908).

No. 3951. Persia (Bushire). (January 8.)

No. 3952. Brazil (Santos). (January 9.)

No. 3953. Persia (Kermanshah). (January 22.)

II. MISCELLANEOUS SERIES.

No. 664. Belgium (coalmining industry). (September 19.)

No. 665. China (visit to Southern Ports). (October 22.)

No. 666. Japan (coal mines of Kyjushu). (October 29.)

CANADA.

Papers relative to the working of taxation of the unimproved value of land in Canada (in continuation of [Cd. 3191.], November 1906). (September 6.)

IRISH LAND COMMISSION.

I. (Proceedings)—

1. Return for the month of July, 1907. (September 3.)

2. Return for the month of August, 1907. (September 19.)

3. Return for the month of September, 1907. (November 4.)

4. Return for the month of October, 1907. (November 26.)

5. Return for the month of November, 1907. (January 4.)

II. Return of advances made under the Irish Land Act, 1903, during the month of January, 1907. (November 11.)

STRAITS SETTLEMENTS.

Reports on the Federated Malay States for 1906 (for reports for 1905, *see* [Cd. 3186.], October, 1906). (September 7.)

PETERHEAD HARBOUR.

Reports respecting Peterhead Harbour Works (in continuation of [Cd. 3179.], (September 9.)

LUNACY (IRELAND).

Fifty-sixth Report of the Inspectors of Lunatics in Ireland, for the year 1906. (September 10.)

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.

Returns of accidents and casualties as reported to the Board of Trade by the several railway companies in the United Kingdom in pursuance of the Regulation of Railways Act (1871), together with the reports of the inspecting officers, assistant inspecting officers, and sub-inspectors of the Railway Department to the Board of Trade, upon certain accidents which were inquired into—

I. During the three months ended 31st March, 1907. (September 12.)

II. During the three months ended 30th June, 1907. (November 4.)

III. During the three months ended 30th September, 1907. Part I. (Returns of Accidents). (January 10.)

CONGESTION IN IRELAND (ROYAL COMMISSION).

I. Sixth Report of the Commissioners with Appendix (Minutes of Evidence taken in County Sligo and County Leitrim, 17th to 27th April, 1907, and documents relating thereto). September 13th.)

II. Seventh Report of the Commissioners, with first Appendix (Minutes of Evidence taken in Ireland, 16th May to 11th June, 1907, and documents relating thereto), and second Appendix. Statistics relating to holdings. October 19th.)

III. Eighth Report of the Commissioners, with Appendix (Minutes of Evidence taken in Kerry and Cork, 3rd to 19th July, 1907) and documents relating thereto. (November, 27th.)

IV. Ninth Report of the Commissioners, with Appendix (Minutes of Evidence taken in County Mayo, 21st August to 3rd September, 1907) and documents relating thereto. (December 4th.)

UNITED STATES, NO. 1. (1907).

Notes exchanged with the American Ambassador on the subject of the Newfoundland Fisheries. (September 14th.)

SERVIA (NEW CUSTOMS TARIFF).

Translation of the New Customs Tariff of Servia, as modified by Commercial Treaties with the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Switzerland, Italy, Belgium, and Turkey; together with the Tariff of Servian Duties known as "Trosharina." (September 14th.)

VIVISECTION (ROYAL COMMISSION).

Third Report of the Commissioners with Appendix (Minutes of Evidence, April to July, 1907). (September 17th.)

TUBERCULOSIS (HUMAN AND BOVINE) (ROYAL COMMISSION).

Second Interim Report of the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the relations of human and animal tuberculosis. Part II. Appendix, Vol. 3. (September 17th.)

REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS (GREAT BRITAIN).

Fiftieth Report, for the year 1906, of His Majesty's Inspector of Reformatory and Industrial Schools. Part II General Report and Appendices III. to XI. (September 20th.)

CYPRUS.

Annual Report for 1906–1907. (September 21st.)

CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD (IRELAND).

Report of the Board, for the year ended 31st March, 1907. (September 23rd.)

NEW SOUTH WALES.

Papers relative to the working of taxation of the unimproved value of land in New South Wales (in continuation of [Cd. 3740.], September, 1907.) (September 23rd.)

RUSSIA, NO. 1. (1907).

Convention, signed 31st August, 1907, between Great Britain and Russia, containing arrangements on the subject of Persia, Afghanistan, and Thibet. (September 25th.)

AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS (IRELAND).

I. Abstracts showing the acreage under crops, and the numbers of live stock in each county and province, 1906–1907. (September 27th.)

II. Return of prices of crops, live stock, and other Irish agricultural products for the year 1906. (October 4th.)

III. Agricultural Statistics of Ireland with detailed report for the year 1906. (October 26th.)

MINES AND QUARRIES.

General Report and Statistics for 1906—

I. Part II. (Labour)—General Report and Statistics relating to persons employed and accidents at mines and quarries in the United Kingdom, and to the enforcement of the Mines and Quarries Acts. (September 30th.)

II. Part III. (Out-put)—General Report and Statistics relating to the output and value of the minerals raised in the United Kingdom, the amount and value of the metals produced, and the exports and imports of minerals. (October 4th.)

FIJI.

Correspondence respecting the tenure of land in Fiji. (September 30th.)

TRISTAN DA CUNHA.

Further correspondence relating to the Island of Tristan da Cunha (in continuation of [Cd. 3098], September, 1906). (September 30.)

POLICE (METROPOLIS).

Report of the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, for the year 1906. (October 1.)

INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITIONS COMMITTEE.

I. Report of the Committee appointed by the Board of Trade to make inquiries with reference to the participation of Great Britain in great international exhibitions; together with the appendices thereto.

II. Minutes of evidence taken by the Committee appointed by the Board of Trade to make inquiries with reference to the participation of Great Britain in great international exhibitions; with Appendices and Index. (October 2.)

SECONDARY EDUCATION (SCOTLAND)

Report for the year 1907, by J. Struthers, Esq., C.B., LL.D. (October 10.)

NEWFOUNDLAND.

Further correspondence relating to the Newfoundland Fishery Question (in continuation of [Cd. 3262.], December 1906). (October 10.)

INDIA.

I. (Trade).—Review of the trade of India in 1906–1907. (October 16.)

II. (Excise Committee).—Orders of the Government of India on Chapters XI., XII., and XIII. of the Report of the Excise Committee 1905–1906. (November 12.)

MISCELLANEOUS.

No. 4 (1907). Proceedings of the First International Conference on the sleeping sickness, held at London in June 1907. (October 19.)

No. 5 (1907). Reports from His Majesty's Representatives abroad respecting the composition and functions of the Second or Upper Chamber in Foreign States. (December 14.)

No. 6 (1907). Further paper respecting the proceedings of the First International Conference on the sleeping sickness held in London in June 1907 (in continuation of Miscellaneous, No. 4 (1907) [Cd. 3778.]. (December 16.)

No. 1 (1908). Correspondence respecting the Second Peace Conference, held at the Hague in 1907 (with reference to "Miscellaneous, No. 1 (1899)"). (January 4.)

CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION BOARDS (BOARD OF TRADE LABOUR DEPARTMENT).

Report on rules of voluntary conciliation and arbitration boards and joint committees. (October 19.)

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1887.

Return of the number of eviction notices filed during the quarter ended 30th September 1907. (October 23.)

HOUSE-LETTING (SCOTLAND).

Report to the Secretary for Scotland of the Departmental Committee on House-Letting in Scotland. Volume II. Minutes of Evidence, Appendices, and Index. (October 26.)

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP (TINNING OF METALS.)

Special Report by Miss A. M. Anderson, principal lady inspector of factories, and T. M. Legge, M.D., Medical Inspector of Factories, on dangerous processes in the coating of metal with lead, together with Report by G. E. Duckering, inspector of factories, on an experimental investigation into the condition of work in tinning workshops. (October 29.)

COMMERCIAL.

No. 10 (1907). Correspondence respecting the additional Act to the Brussels Sugar Convention of 5th March, 1902; signed at Brussels, 28th August, 1907. (October 29.)

No. 11 (1907). Despatch from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affairs at Paris, transmitting a copy of the convention respecting the commercial relations between Canada and France; signed at

Paris, 19th September, 1907. (November 28.)

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

I. Orders made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and confirmed by the Board of Trade—

1. Amending the Dartford District Light Railways Order, 1903.

2. Amending the Headcorn and Maidstone Junction Light Railway Order, 1906.

3. Amending the Holmfield and South Ouram Light Railway Orders 1902 and 1905.

4. Extending the borrowing powers of the Kent and East Sussex Light Railway Company.

II. Orders made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade—

1. Authorising the construction of light railways in the urban district of Colwyn Bay and Colwyn, in the county of Denbigh, in extension of the light railway authorised by the Llandudno and Colwyn Bay Light Railway Order, 1898, and amending the said Order, and the Llandudno and Colwyn Bay Light Railway (Deviation and Amendment) Order, 1903.

2. Authorising the transfer to the Great Western Railway Company of the powers conferred on the Callington Light Railway Company by the Callington Light Railway Order, 1900, as amended by the Callington Light Railway (Extension of Time) Order, 1903, and reviving the powers granted, and extending the period limited by the said Orders for the compulsory purchase of lands, and extending the period limited by the said Orders for the completion of the railway and works thereby authorised.

3. Transferring to a company the powers conferred upon the rural district councils of Escrick and of Riccall by the Derwent Valley Light Railway Order, 1902, and amending that Order.

4. Amending the borrowing powers of the Southwold Railway Company, and for other purposes. (November 4.)

5. Authorising the construction of additional light railways in the borough of Maidstone.

6. Authorising the East and West Yorkshire Union Railways Company to exercise further borrowing powers.

7. Reviving the powers granted, and extending the period limited by the Cromarty and Dingwall Light Railway Order, 1902, for the compulsory purchase of lands, and extending the period limited by that Order for the completion of the railway and works by that Order authorised, and authorising a deviation of part of the said railway, and the compulsory purchase of certain lands for the purposes of the said railway and works. (December 11.)

COLONIAL OFFICE.

Despatch to the governors of the self-governing colonies relative to the reorganisation of the Colonial Office. (November 6.)

ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT.

Report for the Year 1906, Vol. 48. (November 6.)

WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN PUBLIC HOUSES.

Information obtained from certain police forces as to the frequenting of public houses by women and children. (November 6.)

EVICTIONS (IRELAND).

Return of evictions in Ireland for the quarter ended 31st September, 1907. (November 12.)

BANKING, RAILWAY, AND SHIPPING STATISTICS (IRELAND).

Report for June, 1907. (November 12.)

RAILWAY SERVANTS (HOURS OF LABOUR).

Return in pursuance of Section 4 of the Regulation of Railways Act, 1889, of railway servants of certain classes who were on duty on the railways of the United Kingdom for more than twelve hours at a time, or who, after being on duty more than twelve hours, were allowed to resume work with less than nine hours rest, showing: (1) Periods of duty from start to finish without any deductions; (2) Periods of duty after deduction of time spent in travelling home after relief; with Appendices giving additional statements and explanations furnished by the railway companies—

I. On one or more occasions during the month of July, 1907. (November 13.)

II. On one or more occasions during the month of October, 1907. (January 24.)

JUDICIAL STATISTICS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1869.

Report on the Judicial Statistics of Scotland for the year 1906. (November 14.)

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES.

I. Agricultural Statistics, 1906—

1. Vol. XLI., Part IV. Colonial and Foreign Statistics, with Index to Vol. XLI. (November 15.)

2. Vol. XLII., Part I. Acreage and Live Stock Returns of Great Britain, with summaries of the United Kingdom. (January 1.)

II. Annual Report of Proceedings under the Sale of Food and Drugs Acts, 1875 to 1899, the Merchandise Marks Acts, 1887 to 1894, the Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Act, 1893, and the Board of Agriculture Act, 1889 (Section 2, Sub-section 3), for the year 1906. (December 30.)

ALIENS ACT, 1905.

Return of alien passengers brought to the United Kingdom from ports in Europe or within the Mediterranean Sea during the three months ended 30th September, 1907, together with the number of expulsion orders made during that period requiring aliens to leave the United Kingdom. (November 15.)

UNEMPLOYED WORKMEN ACT, 1905.

Report by the Local Government Board for Scotland, as to the proceedings of Distress Committees in Scotland, for the year ended 15th May, 1907. (November 15.)

JAMAICA.

Despatch from the Governor relative to the earthquake at Kingston, Jamaica, on 14th January, 1907, and the reply thereto (in continuation of [Cd. 3560.], June, 1907). (November 15.)

AUSTRALIA.

Despatch from the Governor-General enclosing the Navigation Bill, 1907, of the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia. (November 15.)

BIRTHS, DEATHS, AND MARRIAGES.

Sixty-ninth Annual Report of the Registrar-General of Births, Deaths, and Marriages in England and Wales (1906). (November 15.)

INEBRIATES ACTS, 1879–1900 (SCOTLAND).

Report of the Inspector for Scotland under the Inebriates Acts, for the year 1906. (November 20.)

INEBRIATES ACTS (IRELAND).

Third Report (with Appendices) of the Inspector for Ireland under the Acts, for the year 1906. (November 26.)

NORTH SEA FISHERIES INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE.

Second Report (Southern Area) Fishery and Hydrographical Investigations in the North Sea and adjacent Waters, 1904–1905. Part I. (November 27.)

EXPLOSIVES(EXPLOSION OF GELIGNITE ON THE FISHGUARD RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION WORKS).

Report to the Secretary of State for the Home Department on the circumstances attending an explosion which occurred during the operation of thawing gelignite in connection with the construction of the new Great Western Railway line from Clarbeston Road to Fishguard, Pembrokeshire, on the 26th Februray, 1906. (November 27.)

MERCANTILE MARINE (SEAMEN EMPLOYED).

Return of the number, ages, ratings, and nationalities of the seamen employed on 4th April, 1906, on vessels registered under Part I. of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, in the British Islands. (November 29.)

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

Memorandum on the study of history in Scottish schools. (December 3.)

FISHERIES (SCOTLAND).

Twenty-fifth Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland, for the year 1906. Part III. Scientific investigations. (November 30.)

CHECK-WEIGHING IN THE IRON AND STEEL TRADES.

Report of the Departmental Committee on Check-weighing in the Iron and Steel Trades (with evidence, etc.). (December 4.)

BUILDING ACCIDENTS COMMITTEE.

Report of the Departmental Committee appointed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department to inquire into the dangers attendant on building operations; with draft Regulations, Minutes of Evidence, and Appendices. (December 10.)

FOREIGN IMPORT DUTIES (1907).

Statement of the rates of import duties levied in European Countries, Egypt, the United States, Mexico, Japan, China, and Persia, upon the produce and manufactures of the United Kingdom. (December 14.)

COST OF LIVING OF THE WORKING CLASSES.

Report of an inquiry by the Board of Trade into working class rents, housing and retail prices, together with the standard rates of wages prevailing in certain occupations in the principal industrial towns of the United Kingdom; with an introductory memorandum. (December 21.)

OPTIONS AND FUTURES (LEGISLATION RESPECTING).

Report by His Majesty's Ambassador to the United States of America on legislation in regard to gambling in "options and futures" (supplementary to [Cd. 3280.]). (December 21.)

TRADE WITH NEW ZEALAND (BOARD OF TRADE, COMMERCIAL INTELLIGENCE COMMITTEE).

Report upon the conditions and prospects of British trade in New Zealand by the Advisory Committee on Commercial Intelligence of the Board of Trade, based on information collected by their Commissioner, Mr. R. J. Jeffray. (December 30.)

TRADE WITH CANADA (BOARD OF TRADE, COMMERCIAL INTELLIGENCE COMMITTEE).

Report upon the Condition and Prospects of British Trade in Canada by Mr. Richard Grigg, Special Commissioner to the Advisory Committee to the Board of Trade on Commercial Intelligence. December 30.)

MINES (ROYAL COMMISSION).

Minutes of Evidence taken before the Royal Commission on Mines; with Index and Appendices. Volume II. (December 21.)

STATISTICS.

Statistical Abstract for the British Empire in each year from 1892 to 1906. Fourth Number. (January 24.)

WEST INDIES.

List of Laws dealing with Emigration of Labourers from British West Indian Colonies to Foreign Countries. (January 24.)

VICE-REGAL COMMISSION ON IRISH RAILWAYS.

Vice-Regal Commission on Irish Railways—

I. Second Report of the Commissioners;

II. Appendix to the Second Report of the Commissioners. (January 24.)

NATAL.

I. Further Correspondence relating to Native Affairs in Natal (in continuation of [Cd. 3247.] and Cd. 3563.]);

II. Report of the Native Affairs Commission, 1906–1907. (January 27.)

TRANSVAAL.

Further Correspondence relating to Legislation affecting Asiatics in the Transvaal (in continuation of [Cd. 3308], February, 1907). (January 27.)

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

List of elementary schools and certified efficient schools in England (excluding Monmouthshire) on 1st August, 1907.

QUEENSLAND.

Papers relative to the workings of taxation on the unimproved value of land in Queensland (in continuation of [Cd. 3761], September, 1907).

MERCHANT SHIPPING.

Correspondence relating to proposed legislation of Australia and New Zealand on the subject of merchant shipping (in continuation of [Cd. 3826], November, 1907.

NAVY (GUNNERY).

Result of test of gunlayers with heavy guns in His Majesty's Fleet, 1907.

POST OFFICE.

1. Additional articles to the agreement of 29th April—7th November, 1906, for the exchange of money orders between the Post Office of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the Post Office of the Dutch Colony of Surinam, dated 28th October, 1907—2nd December, 1907.

2. Agreement between the Post Office of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the Post Office of the Dutch Colony of Curaçao, dated 25th April, 1907—15th June, 1907.

3. Agreement between the Post Office of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the Post Office of the Republic of Salvador, dated 27th June, 1907—27th August, 1907.

4. Agreement between the Post Office of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the Post Office of the Empire of Japan, dated 31st January, 1907.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 3954. Cuba.

No. 3955. Portugal (Goa).

MISCELLANEOUS, No. 2 (1908).

☞ Reports from His Majesty's representatives abroad showing the regulations and methods which guide the application of the second ballot at elections in foreign countries.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION.

☞ Rules of the Estates Commissioners, dated 4th November, 1907.

ALIENS ACT, 1905.

Return of alien passengers brought to the United Kingdom from ports in Europe or within the Mediterranean Sea during the three months ended 31 December, 1907; together with the number of expulsion orders made during that period requiring aliens to leave the United Kingdom.

CHILDREN UNDER THE POOR LAW.

Report to the President of the Local Government Board by T. J. Macnamara, Parliamentary Secretary to the Board.

WAGES AND EFFECTS OF DECEASED SEAMEN.

Account of the sums received and paid in respect of the wages and effects of deceased seamen in the year ended 31st March, 1907.

LOCOMOTIVES ON HIGHWAYS ACT, 1896, MOTOR CAR ACT, 1903.

Orders by the Secretary for Scotland prohibiting motor car traffic on certain highways—

1. (Dated 26th October, 1907) in the county of Wigtown.

2. (Dated 20th November, 1907) in the county of Perth.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

LUNACY (SCOTLAND).

1. General rules for the management of the Kingseat Asylum at Newmachar, Aberdeen.

2. General rules for the government of the asylum, Riccartsbar, Paisley.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP (DANGEROUS AND UNHEALTHY INDUSTRIES).

Regulations made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department in pursuance of Section 79 of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901—

1. Dated 28th August, for the processes of spinning and weaving hemp or jute or hemp or jute tow, and processes incidental thereto.

2. Dated 13th December, for the manufacture of nitro- and amido-derivatives of benzene, and the manufacture of explosives in the use of dinitrobenzol or dinitrotoluol.

3. Dated 20th December, 1907, in respect of processes involving the use of horsehair from China, Siberia, and Russia.

TRINIDAD.

Rules for the government of district prisons, and amended rules providing for punishment of officials for breaches of discipline.

LUNACY.

1. Report to the Lord Chancellor of the number of visits made, the number of patients seen, and the number of miles travelled by the visitors of lunatics, pursuant to the Lunacy Act, 1890, between 1st April, 1907, and 1st September, 1907.

2. Return of all sums received by the visitors of lunatics for travelling expenses, or upon any other account, from 1st January to 31st December, 1907.

PUBLIC TRUSTEE.

The Public Trustee Rules, 1907, dated 29th November, 1907.

SHIPPING CASUALTIES.

General rules for formal investigations into shipping casualties and appeals and re-hearings.

COUNTY COURTS.

Treasury Order, dated 22nd October, 1907, regulating fees in county courts.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' DEFERRED ANNUITY FUND.

First Septennial Actuarial Report on the assets and liabilities of the Elementary School Teachers' Deferred Annuity Fund.

LABOURERS (IRELAND) ACT, 1906.

Treasury Minute, dated 6th January, 1908, directing that the "Labourer's Cottages Fund Account" be examined and audited by the Comptroller and Auditor-General.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND CHARGES ACT, 1891.

Treasury Minute, dated 16th December, 1907, under Section 2 (3) of the Public Accounts and Charges Act, 1891, directing that, as from the 1st April, 1908, the receipts under Section 28 (9) of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1906, shall be applied as appropriations in aid of the moneys to be granted by Parliament for Mercantile Marine Services.

INLAND REVENUE.

Treasury Minutes, dated 5th December, 1907—

1. Appointing Mr. George Frederick Howe to be a Special Commissioner of Income Tax.

2. Appointing Mr. Albert Grassman to be a Special Commissioner of Income Tax.

BANK OF ENGLAND.

Return of the amount of notes issued more than forty years and outstanding on 30th October, 1907, which have been written off.

PUBLIC WORKS (IRELAND).

Treasury Minute, dated 11th December, 1907, authorising the renewal of the lease of two small plots of land near the Royal Marine Hotel, Kingstown.

SUPERANNUATION (TREASURY MINUTES).

I. Granting retired allowances under Section 2 of the Superannuation Act, 1887, to—

1. Mr. T. S. Williams, counter clerk and telegraphist, London Postal District, Post Office, dated 23rd August, 1907.

2. Mr. T. O. Hewitt, engineer, first class, Engineer-in-Chief's Department, Post Office, dated 1st October, 1907.

3. Mr. F. T. Freeman, staff clerk, War Office, dated 22nd October, 1907.

4. Mr. John Guillon, foreman of the yard, Chatham, Admiralty, dated 2nd November, 1907.

5. Mr. H. E. Köhler, overseer, Post Office, Brighton, dated 20th November, 1907.

6. Mr. T. F. Hart, assistant superintendent, Post Office, Brighton, dated 20th November, 1907.

7. Mr. W. L. Mowll, overseer, Post Office, Brighton, dated 20th November, 1907.

8. Mr. F. Westington, overseer, Post Office, Brighton, dated 20th November, 1907.

9. Mr. Charles Barwick, rural postman, Scarborough Post Office, dated 12th December, 1907.

10. Mr. W. R. Barton, a clerk of the Higher Grade of the Second Division, War Office, dated 16th December, 1907.

11. Mr. Walter Charles Bass, established butler, Haslar Hospital, Admiralty dated 8th January, 1908.

12. Mr. Owen Cook, second class surveyor of taxes, Inland Revenue, dated 10th January, 1908.

II. Dated 5th September, 1907, declaring that Henry Harris, labourer, Royal Laboratory, War Department, was appointed without a civil service certificate, through inadvertence on the part of the head of his department.

III. Dated 28th October, 1907, granting a special pension to Sir H. W. Primrose, K.C.B., C.S.I., I.S.O., late chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue.

IV. (Professional Qualifications.)—Dated 21st November, 1907, declaring that for the due and efficient discharge of the duties of the office of Small Holdings Commissioner, professional or other peculiar qualifications not ordinarily to be acquired in the public service are required.

PUBLIC RECORDS.

1. High Court of Justice (King's Bench, Common Pleas, and Exchequer). —Second schedule containing a list and particulars of classes of documents belonging to the late Courts of King's Bench, Common Pleas, and Exchequer Divisions of the High Court of Justice which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office.

2. (War Department). — Seventh schedule containing a list and particulars of classes of documents pertaining to the department of His Majesty's principal Secretary of State for War and deposited in the Public Record Office which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation therein.

PATENTS AND DESIGNS ACT, 1907.

1. (Designs).—Designs Rules, 1908; dated 17th December, 1907.

2. (Patents). — Patents Rules, 1908; dated 17th December, 1907.

3. (Patents). — Register of Patent Agents' Rules, 1908; dated 17th December, 1907.

RAMSGATE HARBOUR.

Statements of receipts and payments made by the Board of Trade, for the year ended 31st March, 1907; together with an account of the receipt and issue of stores.

SEAMEN'S SAVINGS BANKS, MONEY ORDERS, AND TRANSMISSION OF WAGES.

Account of all deposits received and repaid by the Board of Trade on account of Seamen's Savings Banks, under the authority of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, during the year ended 26th November, 1906, and of the interest thereon; Statement showing the number and amount of seamen's money orders issued and paid at ports in the United Kingdom and at ports abroad, from 1855 to 31st March, 1907; also Statements showing the receipts and payments in connection with the transmission of seamen's wages, Home and Foreign, from 1878 to 31st March, 1907.

GENERAL LIGHTHOUSE FUND.

Account of the General Lighthouse Fund showing income and expenditure for year ended 31st March, 1907.

POST OFFICE.

I. (Foreign and Colonial Post)—

1. (Japan).—The Foreign and Colonial Parcel Post Amendment (No. 10.) Warrant, 1907, dated 12th September, 1907.

2. (Pitcairn Island and French Settlements of Oceania).—The Foreign and Colonial Parcel Post Amendment (No. 11) Warrant, 1907, dated 16th September, 1907.

3. (Portugal).—The Foreign and Colonial Parcel Post Amendment (No. 12) Warrant, 1908, dated 18th September, 1908.

4. (British East Africa Protectorate). —The Foreign and Colonial Parcel Post Amendment (No. 13) Warrant, 1908, dated 16th January, 1908.

II. (Foreign and Colonial Post except Parcels).—Treasury Warrant, dated 30th September, 1907, as to the Foreign and Colonial Parcel Post except Parcels.

POST OFFICE TELEGRAPHS (INCLUDING TELEPHONES).

Account showing the gross amount received and expended on account of the Telegraph Service during the year ended 31st March, 1907, and the balance of the expenditure over receipts and additional statement; together with account showing the gross amount received and the gross amount expended in respect of the Telegraph Service, including telephones, from the date of the transfer of the telegraphs to the State to the 31st day of March, 1907, (in continuation of Paper No. 369 of session 1906) and certain other statistics.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS, 1894 TO 1903.

1. Order dated 23rd August, 1907, entitled the "Glanders or Farcy Order of 1907."

2. Order dated 26th August, 1907, defining a foreign animals quarantine station at the Port of Liverpool.

3. Order dated 13th September, 1907, defining a foreign animals quarantine station at the Royal Albert Docks, in the Port of London.

4. Order dated 19th September, 1907, revoking Order No. 7324 of the 26th August, 1907, defining a foreign animals quarantine station at the Port of Liverpool.

5. Order dated 23rd October, 1907, revoking Order No. 7335 of the 13th September, 1907, defining a foreign animals quarantine station in the borough of East Ham.

6. Order dated 28th November, 1907, revoking Order No. 6612 of 15th May, 1903, defining a foreign animals wharf at the port at Southampton.

INDIA.

1. (Loans raised in India).—Return of all loans raised in India chargeable on the Revenues of India, outstanding at the commencement of the half-year ended on the 30th September, 1907, with the rates of interest and total amount payable thereon, and the date of the termination of each loan, the debt incurred during the half-year, the moneys raised thereby during the half-year, the loans paid off or discharged during the half-year, and the loans outstanding at the close of the half-year, stating, so far as the public convenience will allow, the purpose or service for which moneys have been raised during the half-year.

2. (Loans raised in England).—Return of all loans raised in England, chargeable on the revenues of India, outstanding at the commencement of the half-year ended on the 30th September, 1907, with the rates of interest and total amount payable thereon, and the date of the termination of each loan, the debt incurred during the half-year, the moneys raised thereby during the half-year, the loans paid off or discharged during the half-year, and the loans outstanding at the close of the half-year stating, so far as the public convenience will allow, the purpose or service for which moneys have been raised during the half-year.

POLLING DISTRICTS.

1. (County of Lancaster).—Order made by the Council of the County of Lancaster re-dividing the Parliamentary Division of Gorton into convenient polling districts.

2. (County of West Suffolk).—Order made by the Council of West Suffolk re-naming the Bradford St. George Polling District, the Rougham Polling District.

3. (County of Surrey).—Orders made by the Council of the County of Surrey—

(i.) Dividing the present Parliamentary Polling district of Farnham into three polling districts.

(ii.) Altering the boundary between the Windlesham and Bagshot Polling Districts.

4. (City of Bath).—Order made by the Council of the City of Bath altering certain Polling Districts in Lyncombe, and Widcombe, and Walcot Wards, in the City of Bath.

5. (County of East Suffolk).—Order made by the Council of the County of East Suffolk altering certain Polling Districts in the Northern or Lowestoft Parliamentary Division of the county.

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS, 1853–1891 (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).

Licence granted by His Majesty to John Williams or Taylor, under the provisions of the Penal Servitude Acts, 1853–1891, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A. of the Penal Servitude Act. 1864.

SHOP HOURS ACT, 1904.

I. Orders made by the following borough councils, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the hours of closing for certain classes of shops within the respective boroughs—

1. Haslingden.
2. Burslem.
3. Rawtenstall.
4. Thornaby-on-Tees.
5. Widnes.
6. Macclesfield.

II. Orders made by the following county councils, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the hours of closing for certain classes of shops within the respective counties—

1. Chester (Northwich and rural parish of Winnington).

2. Lancaster (urban district of Littleborough).

3. West Riding of Yorkshire (urban districts of Golcar, Linthwaite, Marsden, and Slaithwaite).

III. Orders made by the following metropolitan boroughs fixing the hours of closing for certain classes of shops within the respective metropolitan boroughs—

1. Shoreditch.
2. Stepney.

IV. Orders made by the following county borough councils, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the hours of closing for certain classes of shops within the respective county boroughs—

1. Preston.
2. Halifax.

V. Order made by the Cheltenham Borough Town Council, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the hours of closing for certain classes of shops within the borough.

VI. Order made by the following Urban District Councils, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the hours of closing for certain class of shops within the respective urban districts—

1. Tunstall.
2. Llanelly.

VII. Orders made by the Secretary for Scotland providing for the early closing of certain shops classes of Shops—

1. In the burgh of Dundee, dated 31st August, 1907.

2. In the Shettleston and Tollcross Special Lighting District in the county of Lanark, dated 14th October, 1907.

3. In the burgh of Perth, dated 4th December, 1907.

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899.

Annual Statistical Report by the University Court of the University of Glasgow to the Secretary for Scotland, under the provisions of Section 30 of the Universities (Scotland) Act, 1889, for the year 1906–1907.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Order amending final Order No. 42, made under Section 11 (8) of the Education Act, 1902.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES ACT, 1878.

Orders in Council, dated 21st December, 1907—

1. Defining the amount of error to be tolerated in local standards when verified or re-verified by the Board of Trade.

2. Fixing the fees to be paid in respect of the verification and stamping of weights and measures.

NAVAL AND MARINE PAY AND PENSIONS ACT, 1865.

Orders in Council approving memorials of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty praying sanction to—

1. Certain revised arrangements in connection with the victualling of His

Majesty's Fleet, dated 9th September, 1907.

2. The amendment of Clause 8 of Order in Council of 29th November, 1881, as to appointment of colonels-commandant R.M.A. and R.M.L.I., dated 9th September, 1907.

3. The payment of allowances for auditing the accounts of the boys' fund in training ships and establishments, dated 9th September, 1907.

4. The payment to engineer-lieutenants on the senior list of similar allowances to those payable to engineer-lieutenants on the junior list when employed as senior engineers in certain ships, dated 2nd November, 1907.

5. The amendment of the regulations for the R.N.R. approved by Order in Council of 20th October, 1902, in regard to appointment of midshipmen to rank of acting sub-lieutenant, and the appointment of midshipmen and acting sub-lieutenants in the R.N.R., date 2nd November, 1907.

6. The abolition, as from 1st July, 1906, of the non-substantive rating of "trained man" for stokers entered for combined service in the Royal Navy and Royal Fleet Reserve; and the increase of the non-continuous service rate of pay of these special service stokers, 1st class, from 1s. 9d. to 1s. 10d. a day from that date, dated 2nd November, 1907.

7. The variation of the allowance within the existing maximum of 4d. a day to the Yeoman of Stores in ships of the Navy, dated 2nd November, 1907.

8. Seamen and Marines lent for colonial employment in West Africa being allowed to count such service as double time for purposes of pension, dated 2nd November, 1907.

9. The issue of certain allowances in lieu of victuals to any persons in the Royal Navy or Royal Marines, dated 2nd November, 1907.

10. The payment of certain allowances to officers of the Royal Marines employed as instructors of wireless telegraphy or as assistants for wireless telegraphy duties in His Majesty's Fleet, dated 21st December, 1907.

11. The payment of a certain allowance, in addition to full pay, to the Engineer Commander borne for Fleet duties on the China Station, so long as there is no Engineer Captain so borne, dated 21st December, 1907.

12. The payment of special allowances to Junior Engineer Officers appointed for instructional duties at training establishments for boy artificers and mechanicians, dated 21st December, 1907.

13. A modification of the regulations for the advancement of boy artificers, dated 21st December, 1907.

14. An amendment of the rule by which the time served by petty officers may, under certain conditions, be doubled for pension purposes, dated 21st December, 1907.

15. A revision of the titles and rates of pay of cook ratings, and removal of certain restrictions as to amount of pension under Article 1932A of the Regulations for the government of His Majesty's Naval Service, dated 21st December, 1907.

16. A rule allowing 3rd Class domestics who have served as 1st or 2nd Class domestics to be recommended for the long service and good conduct medal, thus admitting of the award of the medal on re-employment in one of the higher ratings, dated 21st December, 1907.

FOREIGN JURISDICTION ACT, 1890.

Order in Council, dated 9th September, 1907, entitled "The Nigeria Coinage Order in Council, 1907."

Orders in Council, dated 2nd November, 1907—

1. Providing for the exercise of His Majesty's jurisdiction in the islands of the Pacific Ocean known as the New Hebrides in accordance with the terms of the Anglo-French Convention.

2. Entitled "The East Africa Order in Council, 1907."

3. Entitled "The North Eastern Rhodesia Order in Council, 1907."

4. Entitled "The Swaziland Crown Lands Order in Council, 1907."

Order in Council, dated 21st December, 1907, entitled "The Nyasaland Order in Council, 1907 (No. 2)."

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894.

Orders in Council, dated 2nd November, 1907—

1. Relating to seamen's lodging houses in the district of the county borough of Swansea.

2. Confirming byelaws made by the Trinity House of Kingston-upon-Hull fixing the rates of pilotage between Hull and Goole.

3. Applying Section 238 of the Act to seamen who desert from Roumanian merchant ships.

4. Revoking Orders in Council of 3rd February, 1863, and 7th January, 1864, made under the Passengers Act, 1855, respecting the carriage of emigrants on board ship.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ACT, 1858.

Order in Council, dated 21st December, 1907, approving a statement of new and revised appointments and alterations of salaries in the establishment of the Secretary of State for India in Council.

NAVAL DISCIPLINE ACT, 1866.

Order in Council, dated 2nd November, 1907, approving certain revised General Orders for regulating the procedure and practice of Naval courts-martial; to come into force on 1st April, 1908.

COLONIAL PRISONERS REMOVAL ACT, 1884.

Order in Council, entitled, "The Colonial Prisoners Removal Order in Council, 1907," dated 9th September, 1907.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

MERSEY DOCKS AND HARBOUR BOARD.

Accounts for the year ended 1st July, 1907. Delivered (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

MARGATE PIER AND HARBOUR COMPANY.

Report and statement of accounts for the year ended, 5th April, 1907. Delivered (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877.

Statutes made—

1. By the Governing Body of Peterhouse or St. Peter's College, Cambridge, on the 4th May, 1907, altering and amending Statute XXI. of the Statutes of the College.

2. By the Governing Body of Trinity College, Oxford, on the 27th May, 1907, altering and amending Statute I. of the Statutes of the College.

3. By the Governing Body of Queen's College, Oxford, on the 19th June, 1907, altering and amending Stat. Tit. II., Clauses 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, and 15, and Stat. Tit. XXIII., Clause 8, of the Statutes of the College.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. (No. 1).

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1889.

University Court Ordinances:—

1. No. 22 (Edinburgh, No. 11). Regulations for degrees in arts.

2. No. 23 (Glasgow No. 6). Regulations for degrees in arts.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. (No. 2.).

House adjourned at half-past Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 29th January, 1908.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MESSAGE TO ATTEND HIS MAJESTY.

The House went; and having returned,

Mr. SPEAKER informed the House, That he had issued, during the Recess, Warrants for New Writs, for Liverpool (Kirkdale Division), in the room of David MacIvor, esquire, deceased; Kingston-upon-Hull, the hon. Charles Henry Wellesley Wilson, called to the House of Peers; Devonshire (Ashburton Division), Harry Trelawney Eve, esquire, K.C., who hath accepted the Office of Judge of the High Court of Justice; Herefordshire

(Southern or Ross Division), Lieutenant-Colonel Alan Coulstoun Gardner, deceased; County Carlow, John Hammond, esquire, deceased.

NEW WRIT.

New Writ for the County of Cornwall (Mid or St. Austell Division), in the room of William Alexander McArthur, esq., (Chiltern Hundreds).—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

NEW MEMBERS SWORN.

Arthur Hill, esquire, commonly called Lord Arthur Hill, for County of Down (West Down Division); Charles McArthur esquire, Parliamentary Borough of Liverpool (Kirkdale Division); Guy Greville Wilson, esquire, commonly called the hon. Guy Greville Wilson, Parliamentary Borough of Kingston-upon-Hull (West Division); John Phillips, esquire, County of Longford (South Longford Division); Captain Earnest Fitzroy Morrison-Bell, County of Devon (Mid or Ashburton Division.)

IMPRISONMENT OF A MEMBER (MR. LAURENCE GINNELL).

MR. SPEAKER acquainted the House that he had received the following Letter from Mr. Justice Ross, relating to the Imprisonment of Mr. Laurence Ginnell, a Member of this House:—

Land Judge's Court,
Four Courts,
Dublin,
2nd January, 1908.

SIR,

I beg to inform you that, by order of this Court dated 20th day of December, 1907, it was declared that Lawrence Ginnell, esq., Member of Parliament, was guilty of contempt of court, and was ordered to be imprisoned in Kilmainham Prison, for the term of six calendar months from the date of his arrest or until further order.

In pursuance of the said order the hon. Member was arrested on the 23rd of December, 1907.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
JOHN ROSS,
Judge of the High Court of Justice,
Chancery Division.

To the Right Hon. The Speaker of the House of Commons.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) said he paused for a moment expecting the Chancellor of the Exchequer to make some Motion upon the communication which had just been made to the House. Those hon. Members who had taken the trouble to make themselves acquainted with the precedents and history of the House must be aware that there was no instance in which a letter of this kind had been received without a Motion being made to appoint a Committee to enquire into the matter, and report to the House whether there were any circumstances connected with it which required the further attention of the House. He would not delay the House by reading precedents, because it was only a short time since a similar case arose, and then the precedents were gone into fully. In that case the late Government was in office, and the then Prime Minister took the course which the Chancellor of the Exchequer was now taking—he left it to a private Member to make the Motion. The right hon. Gentleman then explained that he had not himself moved the Motion because the offence was not one of simple contempt, but was complicated by the magistrates taking action under the Statute of Edward III. But for that the right hon. Gentleman said he would have made the Motion according to precedent. But the present was not a complicated case; it was a simple case of contempt of court, and should be dealt with in accordance with precedents. But when the Motion was made, and it was pointed out what the clear and unvarying precedent had been, the then Prime Minister accepted the Motion he (Mr. Redmond) made. When in a former case he endeavoured to raise the question of privilege, he was told that privilege did not arise until the arrest had actually taken place. No such objection could be raised now, and he submitted that there was no instance in the whole history of Parliament where a Member had been imprisoned for contempt of court, where a Committee had not been appointed. He was sorry it had been left to him to move in this matter. He thought it would have been better if the Chancellor of the Exchequer had followed former precedents and moved the Motion himself. However, he was the best judge of what was his duty towards the House and towards questions of privilege arising in the House, and he had no right to blame him. He would, however, do what he did in 1902, in the case of the hon. Member who sat for North Sligo. He would move a Motion in the exact terms as that which was then adopted by the House, viz.—

> "That the letter of 2nd January, 1908, from Mr. Justice Ross to Mr. Speaker, informing the House of the attachment of Mr. Laurence Ginnell for contempt of court, be referred to a Select Committee for the purpose of considering whether any of the matters referred to therein demand the attention of this House."

*MR. SPEAKER: By this Motion my functions are really brought into operation. I have to consider, when a Motion of this kind is made, whether *prima facie* the question of privilege is raised. I have been refreshing my memory as to the precedents, and I find there are a number of cases in which committees have been appointed to consider matters similar to the one now brought before the House. Five out of the last six cases dealt with were referred to committees, and the committees invariably came to the same conclusion—namely, that the privileges of Parliament do not extend to cases of criminal contempt, and the hon. Member for Waterford has asked the House once more to reopen a question which I cannot help thinking the House has decided over and over again. I base myself on what occurred in 1903, when a similar case arose on the arrest of the hon. Member who then sat for North Sligo, and my predecessor declined to allow such a motion as the hon. Member now proposes to be made on the ground that in a case of criminal contempt there was no privilege. I find myself unable to get away from the precedent my predecessor laid down on that occasion. It is for me to say whether there are *prima facie* grounds for supposing that there has been any breach of privilege in the committal of this hon. Member, and in the absence of any distinction having been drawn, I am bound to say I do not think there is any *prima facie* case of breach of privilege.

MR. JOHN REDMOND asked who was to decide whether this was a case of civil or criminal contempt. He respectfully called attention to the fact that in the document the Speaker had read there was no intimation from the Judge as to the nature of the contempt. He further contended that the decisions of committees did not bind the House unless the House specifically adopted them, and the report of the committee in 1902 was never discussed or adopted by the House.

*MR. SPEAKER: In answer to the two points taken by the hon. Member, I would like to say that the reports of the Select Committees which have been referred to, always recommended that the House should take no further action, and the very fact that the House took no further action is to my mind proof that the House approved the decisions of those committees and assented to their findings. The second point put, is how do I know this hon. Member was committed in respect of criminal contempt? If there were any suggestion that the hon. Member had only been guilty of a civil contempt the matter might be different, and there might be a matter to be inquired into; but I have never heard it alleged that there is any question of civil contempt. Civil contempt I understand to be a refusal to pay a debt adjudged to be due. I have no official intimation of what occurred. I can only use the same means as the hon. Member of informing myself, and, subject to its being shown that the contempt of which the hon. Member was guilty was a civil and not a criminal one, I do not see how it can be dealt with as a matter of privilege.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) pointed out that the decisions in previous cases were decisions of magistrates at petty sessions or of a common law Judge, and seeing that Mr. Justice Ross was a Judge of the Chancery Division, it seemed to him the point was well worth inquiring into before a committee.

*MR. SPEAKER: I think I am right in saying that Mr. Justice Ross was the Judge in the 1902 case, and committed the hon. Member for North Sligo.

MR. T. M. HEALY said that was a committal by the magistrates in the exercise of criminal jurisdiction.

*MR. SPEAKER: I may be wrong about the 1902 case; but, at any rate, in the 1903 case Mr. Justice Ross was the Judge, and he then clearly had a criminal jurisdiction.

MR. JOHN REDMOND asked how it was to be proved that a Member had been guilty of only a civil contempt. So long as there was doubt as to that it was better that the House should follow the old precedents even at the risk of erring in being too lenient. He hoped he would be allowed to move his Motion.

*MR. SPEAKER: I should be very glad to allow the Motion to be moved if I thought it compatible with my duty. I can assure the hon. Member that it is very disagreeable to me to have to decide these matters. I would much rather the House should decide them. At the same time the duty is cast on me to decide whether a *prima facie* case is made out, and I am bound to say I do not think it has been made out or even suggested that this case is one of civil and not of criminal contempt.

ELECTIONS.

Ordered, That all Members who are returned for two or more places in any part of the United Kingdom do make their Election for which of the places they will serve, within one week after it shall appear that there is no question upon the Return for that place; and if any thing shall come in question touching the Return or Election of any Member, he is to withdraw during the time the matter is in debate; and that all Members returned upon double Returns do withdraw till their Returns are determined.

Resolved, That no Peer of the Realm, except such Peers of Ireland as shall for the time being be actually elected, and shall not have declined to serve, for any county, city, or borough of Great Britain, hath any right to give his vote in the Election of any Member to serve in Parliament.

Resolved, That it is a high infringement of the liberties and privileges of the Commons of the United Kingdom for any Lord of Parliament, or other Peer or Prelate, not being a Peer of Ireland at the time elected, and not having declined to serve for any county, city, or borough of Great Britain, to concern himself in the election of Members to serve for the Commons in Parliament, except only any Peer of Ireland, at such Elections in Great Britain respectively where such Peer shall appear as a candidate, or by himself, or any others, be proposed to be elected; or for any Lord-Lieutenant or Governor of any county to avail himself of any authority derived from his Commission, to influence the Election of any Member to serve for the Commons in Parliament.

Resolved, That if it shall appear that any person hath been elected or returned a Member of this House, or endeavoured so to be, by Bribery, or any other corrupt practices, this House will proceed with the utmost severity against all such persons as shall have been wilfully concerned in such Bribery or other corrupt practices.

WITNESSES.

Resolved, That if it shall appear that any person hath been tampering with any Witness, in respect of his evidence to be given to this House, or any Committee thereof, or directly or indirectly hath endeavoured to deter or hinder any person from appearing or giving evidence, the same is declared to be a high crime or misdemeanor; and this House will proceed with the utmost severity against such offender.

Resolved, That if it shall appear that any person hath given false evidence in any case before this House, or any Committee thereof, this House will proceed with the utmost severity against such offender.

METROPOLITAN POLICE.

Ordered, That the Commissioners of the Police of the Metropolis do take care that, during the Session of Parliament, the passages through the streets leading to this House be kept free and open, and that no obstruction be permitted to hinder the passage of Members to and from this House, and that no disorder be allowed in Westminster Hall, or in the passages leading to this House during the Sitting of Parliament, and that there be no annoyance therein or thereabouts; and that the Serjeant at Arms attending this House do communicate this Order to the Commissioners aforesaid.

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS.

Ordered, That the Votes and Proceedings of this House be printed being first perused by Mr. Speaker; and that he do appoint the printing thereof; and that no person but such as he shall appoint do presume to print the same.

PRIVILEGES.

On the Question, That a Committee of Privileges be appointed—

MR. T. M. HEALY asked what were the privileges in question.

***MR. SPEAKER**: I am afraid it would take me a very long time to go into the matter.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to move as an addition "including the question of the arrest of Mr. L. Ginnell."

***MR. SPEAKER**: I have just ruled that that is not a matter of privilege.

Ordered, That a Committee of Privileges be appointed.

OUTLAWRIES BILL.

"For the more effectual preventing Clandestine Outlawries," read the first time; to be read a second time.

JOURNAL.

Ordered, That the Journal of this House, from the end of the last Session to the end of the present Session, with an Index thereto, be printed.

Ordered, That the said Journal and Index be printed by the appointment and under the direction of Sir Courtenay Peregrine Ilbert, K.C.S.I., C.I.E., the Clerk of this House.

Ordered, That the said Journal and Index be printed by such person as shall be licensed by Mr. Speaker, and that no other person do presume to print the same.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS (RECESS).

The following Papers, presented by His Majesty's Command during the Recess, were delivered to the Librarian of the House of Commons during the Recess, pursuant to the Standing Order of the 14th August, 1896:—

1. Trade Reports (Annual Series).—Copies of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3917 to 3955.

2. Trade Reports (Miscellaneous Series).—Copies of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Miscellaneous Series, Nos. 664 to 666.

3. Treaty Series (No. 27, 1907).—Copy of International Sanitary Convention. Signed at Paris, 3rd December, 1903. Ratifications deposited at Paris, 6th April, 1907.

4. Treaty Series (No. 28, 1907).—Copy of Declaration between the United Kingdom and Portugal respecting Boundaries in Central Africa (Barotseland.) Signed at London, 12th August, 1903.

5. Treaty Series (No. 29, 1907).—Copy of Accession of Ecuador to the Convention signed at Geneva, 22nd August, 1864, for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded in Armies in the Field, 3rd August, 1907.

6. Treaty Series (No. 30, 1907).—Copy of Accession of Venezuela to the Convention signed at Geneva, 6th July, 1906, for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armies in the Field. 8th July, 1907.

7. Treaty Series (No. 31, 1907).—Copy of Agreement between the United Kingdom and Italy respecting the Importation of Drugs and Medical Preparations. 9th July, 1907.

8. Treaty Series (No. 32, 1907).—Copy of Accession of the United Kingdom to the Declarations signed at the Hague, 29th July, 1899, respecting (1) Expanding Bullets; (2) Asphyxiating Gases. 30th August, 1907.

9. Treaty Series (No. 33, 1907).—Copy of Agreement between the United Kingdom and the United States of America respecting Protection of Patents in Morocco. 24th June, 1907.

10. Treaty Series (No. 34, 1907).—Copy of Convention between the United Kingdom and Russia relating to Persia, Afghanistan, and Thibet. Signed at St. Petersburg, 31st August, 1907. Ratifications exchanged at St. Petersburg, 23rd September, 1907.

11. Treaty Series (No. 35, 1907).—Copy of Exchange of Notes establishing a Modus Vivendi between the United Kingdom and the United States of America with regard to the Newfoundland Fisheries. 4th and 6th September, 1907.

12. Treaty Series (No. 36, 1907).—Copy of Convention between the United Kingdom and Belgium for the Exchange of Money Orders. Signed at London, 17th September, 1907. Ratifications exchanged at London, 5th October, 1907.

13. Treaty Series (No. 37, 1907).—Copy of Agreement between the United Kingdom and Sweden respecting the Estates of Deceased Seamen. 5th October, 1907.

14. Treaty Series (No. 38, 1907).—Copy of Accession of Turkey to the Convention signed at Geneva, 6th July, 1906, for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armies in the Field. 24th August, 1907.

15. Treaty Series (No. 39, 1907).—Copy of Accessions, etc., of Foreign States to various International Treaty Engagements.

16. Treaty Series (No. 40, 1907).—Copy of Accession of Nicaragua to the Declarations signed at the Hague, 29th July, 1899, respecting (1) Expanding Bullets; (2) Asphyxiating Gases. 11th October, 1907.

17. Treaty Series (No. 41, 1907).—Copy of Agreement between the United Kingdom and France, supplementary to Money Order Convention of 21st September, 1887. Signed at Paris, 30th June, 1906. Ratifications exchanged at Paris, 23rd October, 1907.

18. Treaty Series (No. 42, 1907).—Copy of Convention between the United Kingdom and France for the Exchange of Money Orders between the United Kingdom and various French Colonies. Signed at Paris, 30th June, 1906. Ratifications exchanged at Paris, 23rd October, 1907.

19. Treaty Series (No. 43, 1907).—Copy of Accession of British Colonies, etc., to the Treaty of Friendship, Commerce, and Navigation between the United Kingdom and Nicaragua. Signed at Nicaragua, 28th July, 1905.

20. Treaty Series (No. 44, 1907).—Copy of Agreement between the United Kingdom and the United States of America, respecting (1) Commercial Travellers' Samples entering the United Kingdom; (2) Import Duties on British Works of Art entering the United States. Signed at London, 19th November, 1907.

21. Treaty Series (No. 45, 1907).—Copy of Agreement between the United Kingdom and France, respecting Commercial Travellers' Samples. Signed at Paris, 23rd October, 1907.

22. Treaty Series (No. 46, 1907).—Copy of International Convention, respecting the Liquor Traffic in Africa. Signed at Brussels, 3rd November, 1906.

23. Treaty Series (No. 1, 1908).—Copy of Commercial Convention, Protocol and Declaration, between the United Kingdom and Bulgaria. Signed at Sofia, 9th December, 1905. Ratifications exchanged at Sofia, 26th November, 1907.

24. Treaty Series (No. 2, 1908).—Copy of Agreement, additional to the Commercial Convention between the United Kingdom and Egypt of 29th October, 1889. Signed at Cairo, 16th December, 1907.

25. International Conference on Sleeping Sickness (Miscellaneous, No. 4, 1907).—Copy of Proceedings of the First International Conference on the Sleeping Sickness, held at London in June, 1907.

26. Second or Upper Chambers in Foreign States (Miscellaneous, No. 5, 1907.—Copy of Reports from His Majesty's Representatives Abroad respecting the Composition and Functions of the Second or Upper Chamber in Foreign States.

27. International Conference on Sleeping Sickness (Miscellaneous, No. 6, 1907).—Copy of Further Paper respecting the Proceedings of the First International Conference on the Sleeping Sickness, held at London in June, 1907.

28. Peace Conference at The Hague (Miscellaneous, No. 1, 1908).—Copy of Correspondence respecting the Second Peace Conference, held at The Hague in 1907.

29. Sugar Convention (Commercial, No. 10, 1907).—Copy of Correspondence respecting the Additional Act to the Brussels Sugar Convention of 5th March, 1902. Signed at Brussels, 28th August, 1907.

30. Commercial Convention between Canada and France (Commercial, No. 11, 1907).—Copy of Despatch from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Paris, transmitting a Copy of the Convention respecting the Commercial Relations between Canada and France. Signed at Paris, 19th September, 1907.

31. Russia (No. 1, 1907).—Copy of Convention, signed on 31st August, 1907, between Great Britain and Russia, containing arrangements on the subject of Persia, Afghanistan, and Thibet.

32. United States (No. 1, 1907).—Copy of Notes exchanged with the American Ambassador on the subject of the Newfoundland Fisheries.

33. Colonial Reports (Annual).—Copies of Reports, Nos. 536 (Gambia, Annual Report for 1906), 537 (British Central Africa Protectorate, Report for 1906–7), 538 (Bechuanaland Protectorate, Report for 1906–7), 539 (Leeward Islands, Report for 1906–7), 540 (Straits Settlements, Annual Report for 1906), 541 (Turks and Caicos Islands, Annual Report for 1906), 542 (Somaliland Protectorate, Report for 1906–7), 543 (Bahamas, Report for 1906–7), 544 (Barbados, Report for 1906–7), 545 (Trinidad and Tobago, Report for 1906–7), 546 (Grenada, Report for 1906–7), 547 (Mauritius, Annual Report for 1906), 548 (Fiji, Annual Report for 1906), 549 (Jamaica, Report for 1906–7), 550 (British Guiana, Report for 1906–7), 551 (Northern Nigeria, Report for 1906–7), 552 (British Honduras, Annual Report for 1906), 553 (St. Lucia, Report for 1906–7).

34. Colonial Reports (Miscellaneous).—Copies of Reports, Nos. 42 (Ceylon, Report on the Results of the Mineral Survey in 1905–6 by Professor W. R. Dunstan, M.A., LL.D., F.R.S., Director of the Imperial Institute), 43 (Caicos Islands, Report upon the Caicos Islands, with special reference to the further development of the Sisal Industry), 44 (East Africa Protectorate, Report on the Survey Department by Major E. H. Hills, C.M.G., R.E., dated 21st February, 1907), 45 (East Africa Protectorate, Report relating to the Geology of the East Africa Protectorate, by H. Brantewood Muff, esquire, B.A., of the Geological Survey of Great Britain).

35. Newfoundland.—Copy of Further Correspondence relating to the Newfoundland Fishery Question.

36. Australia.—Copy of Despatch from the Governor General enclosing the Navigation Bill, 1907, of the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia.

37. Jamaica.—Copy of Despatch from the Governor relative to the Earthquake at Kingtson, Jamaica, on 14th January, 1907, and the reply thereto.

38. Canada.—Copy of Papers relative to the Working of Taxation of the Unimproved Value of Land in Canada.

39. Fiji.—Copy of Correspondence respecting the Tenure of Land in Fiji.

40. New South Wales.—Copy of Papers relative to the Working of Taxation of the Unimproved Value of Land in New South Wales.

41. Straits Settlements.—Copies of Reports on the Federated Malay States for 1906.

42. West Indies.—Copy of a List of the Laws dealing with the Emigration of Labourers from the British West Indian Colonies to Foreign Countries.

43. Tristan da Cunha.—Copy of Further Correspondence relating to the Island of Tristan da Cunha.

44. Natal.—Copy of Report of the Native Affairs Commission, 1906–7.

45. Natal.—Copy of Further Correspondence relating to Native Affairs in Natal.

46. Transvaal.—Further Correspondence relating to Legislation affecting Asiatics in the Transvaal.

47. Cyprus.—Copy of Annual Report for 1906–7.

48. Colonial Office (Reorganisation).—Copy of Despatch to the Governors of the Self-Governing Colonies relative to the Reorganisation of the Colonial Office.

49. Aliens Act, 1905.—Copy of Return of Alien Passengers brought to the United Kingdom from Ports in Europe or within the Mediterranean Sea during the six months ending 31st December, 1907, together with the number of Expulsion Orders made during that period requiring Aliens to leave the United Kingdom.

50. Congestion in Ireland (Royal Commission).—Copies of Sixth Report of the Royal Commission on Congestion in Ireland, with Appendix (Minutes of Evidence taken in County Sligo and County Leitrim 17th to 27th April, 1907, and Documents relating thereto), of Seventh Report of the Commissioners, with First Appendix (Minutes of Evidence taken in Ireland 16th May to 11th June, 1907, and Documents relating thereto) and Second Appendix (Statistics relating to Holdings), of Eighth Report of the Commissioners, with Appendix (Minutes of Evidence taken in Kerry and Cork 3rd to 19th July, 1907) and Documents relating thereto, of Ninth Report of the Commissioners, with Appendix (Minutes of Evidence taken in County Mayo 21st August to 3rd September, 1907) and Documents relating thereto.

51. Historical Manuscripts (Royal Commission).—Copy of Seventeenth Report of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts.

52. Historical Manuscripts (Royal Commission).—Copy of Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Marquis of Bath, preserved at Longleat, Wiltshire. Volume III. (Prior Papers).

53. Mines and Quarries.—Copy of General Report and Statistics for the year 1906. Part II., Labour; General Report and Statistics relating to Persons employed and Accidents at Mines and Quarries in the United Kingdom, and to the enforcement of the Mines and Quarries Acts.

54. Mines and Quarries.—Copy of General Report and Statistics for the year 1906. Part III., Output; General Report and Statistics relating to the output and value of the Minerals raised in the United Kingdom, the amount and vaule of the Metals produced, and the exports and imports of Minerals.

55. Reformatory and Industrial Schools (Great Britain).—Copy of Fiftieth Report of His Majesty's Inspector of Reformatory and Industrial Schools for 1906. Part II., General Report and Appendices III. to XI.

56. Prisons (England and Wales).—Copy of Report of the Commissioners of Prisons and the Directors of Convict Prisons, with Appendices, for the year ended 31st March, 1907.

57. Police (Metropolis).—Copy of Report of the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis for the year 1906.

58. Tuberculosis (Human and Bovine) (Royal Commission).—Copy of Second Interim Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the relations of Human and Animal Tuberculosis. Part II., Appendix. Vol. III.

59. Vivisection (Royal Commission).—Copy of Third Report of the Royal Commission on Vivisection, with Appendix (Minutes of Evidence, April to July, 1907).

60. Factory and Workshop (Tinning of Metals).—Copy of Special Report by Miss A. M. Anderson, Principal Lady Inspector of Factories, and T. M. Legge, esquire, M.D., Medical Inspector of Factories, on Dangerous Processes in the Coating of Metal with Lead; together with a Report by G. E. Duckering, esquire, Inspector of Factories, on an Experimental Investigation into the Conditions of Work in Tinning Workshops.

61. Building Accidents (Departmental Committee).—Copy of Report of the Departmental Committee upon the Dangers attendant on Building Operations, with draft Regulations, Minutes of Evidence, and Appendices.

62. Checkweighing in the Iron and Steel Trades (Departmental Committee).

—Copy of Report of the Departmental Committee on Checkweighing in the Iron and Steel Trades (with Evidence, etc.).

63. Women and Children in Public Houses.—Copy of Information obtained from certain Police Forces as to the frequenting of Public Houses by Women and Children.

64. Explosions (Fishguard Railway Construction Works).—Copy of Report to the Secretary of State for the Home Department on the circumstances attending an Explosion which occurred during the operation of thawing gelignite in connection with the construction of the new Great Western Railway line from Clarbeston Road to Fishguard, Pembrokeshire, on 26th February, 1906.

65. Mines (Royal Commission).—Copy of Minutes of Evidence taken before the Royal Commission on Mines, with Index and Appendices, Vol. II.

66. Board of Agriculture and Fisheries.—Copy of Agricultural Statistics, 1906, Vol. XLI., Part IV., Colonial and Foreign Statistics, with Index to Vol. XLI.

67. Board of Agriculture and Fisheries.—Copy of Agricultural Statistics, 1907, Vol. XLII., Part I., Acreage and Live Stock Returns of Great Britain, with Summaries for the United Kingdom.

68. Board of Agriculture and Fisheries.—Copy of Annual Report of Proceedings under the Sale of Food and Drugs Acts, 1875 to 1899, the Merchandise Marks Acts, 1887 to 1894, and other Acts, for the year 1906.

69. East India (Excise Committee).—Copy of Orders of the Government of India on Chapters XI., XII., and XIII. of the Report of the Excise Committee, 1905–6.

70. Army (Medical Department).—Copy of Report of the Army Medical Department for the year 1906.

71. Railway Servants (Hours of Labour).—Copy of Return, in pursuance of Section 4 of The Regulation of Railways Act, 1889, of Railway Servants of certain classes who were on one or more occasions during the months of July and October, 1907, on duty on the Railways of the United Kingdom for more than twelve hours at a time; or who, after being on duty more than twelve hours, were allowed to resume work with less than nine hours' rest.

72. Railway Servants (Hours of Labour).—Copy of Return, in pursuance of Section 4 of The Regulation of Railways Act, 1889, of Railway Servants of certain classes who were on one or more occasions during the three months ended 30th September, 1907, on duty on the Railways of the United Kingdom for more than twelve hours at a time; or who, after being on duty more than twelve hours, were allowed to resume work with less than nine hours' rest. Part I., Returns of Accidents.

73. Railway Accidents.—Copy of Returns of Accidents and Casualties as reported to the Board of Trade by the several Railway Companies in the United Kingdom during the six months ended 30th June, 1907, together with Reports of the Inspecting Officers of the Railway Department to the Board of Trade upon certain Accidents which were inquired into.

74. Statistical Abstract (British Empire).—Copy of Statistical Abstract for the British Empire in each year from 1892 to 1906. Fourth Number.

75. International Exhibitions Committee.—Copy of Report of the Committee appointed by the Board of Trade to make inquiries with reference to the Participation of Great Britain in Great International Exhibitions, with Minutes of Evidence, Appendices, and Index.

76. Conciliation and Arbitration Boards.—Copy of Report of the Labour Department of the Board of Trade on Rules of Voluntary Conciliation and Arbitration Boards and Joint Committees.

77. Options and Futures (Legislation respecting).—Copy of Report from His Majesty's Ambassador to the United States of America on Legislation respecting Gambling in Options and Futures.

78. Foreign Import Duties, 1907.—Copy of Statement of the Rates of Import Duties levied in European Countries, Egypt, the United States, Mexico, Japan, China, and Persia upon the Produce and Manufactures of the United Kingdom.

79. Cost of Living of the Working Classes.—Copy of Report of an Inquiry by the Board of Trade into Working Class Rents, Housing, and Retail Prices, together with the Standard Rates of Wages prevailing in certain occupations in the principal Industrial Towns of the United Kingdom, with an Introductory Memorandum.

80. Mercantile Marine (Seamen Employed).—Copy of Return of the Number, Ages, Ratings, and Nationalities of the Seamen employed on the 4th April, 1906, on Vessels registered under Part I. of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, in the British Islands.

81. Trade with New Zealand.—Copy of Report upon the Conditions and Prospects of British Trade in New Zealand by the Advisory Committee on Commercial Intelligence by the Board of Trade, based on information collected by their Commissioner, Mr. R. J. Jeffray.

82. Trade with Canada.—Copy of Report upon the Conditions and Prospects of British Trade in Canada, by Mr. Richard Grigg, Special Commissioner of the Advisory Committee to the Board of Trade on Commercial Intelligence.

83. Servia (New Customs Tariff).—Copy of Translation of the New Customs Tariff of Servia, as modified by Commercial Treaties with the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Switzerland, Italy, Belgium, and Turkey; together with the Tariff of Servian Duties known as "Trosharina."

84. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and confirmed by the Board of Trade, amending The Holmfield and Southowram Light Railway Orders of 1902 and of 1905 (Holmfield and Southowram Light Railway (Extension of Time) Order, 1907).

85. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and confirmed by the Board of Trade, amending the Headcorn and Maidstone Junction Light Railway Order, 1906 (Headcorn and Maidstone Junction Light Railway (Amendment) Order, 1907).

86. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of Light Railways in the urban district of Colwyn Bay and Colwyn, in the county of Denbigh, in extension of the light railways authorised by the Llandudno and Colwyn Bay Light Railway Order, 1898, and amending the said Order, and the Llandudno and Colwyn Bay Light Railway (Deviation and Amendment) Order, 1903 (Llandudno and Colwyn Bay Light Railway (Extension and Amendment) Order, 1907).

87. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, amending the borrowing powers of the Southwold Railway Company, and for other purposes (Southwold Light Railway (Borrowing Powers, etc.) Order, 1907).

88. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and confirmed by the Board of Trade, extending the borrowing powers of the Kent and East Sussex Light Railway Company (Kent and East Sussex Light Railway (Further Borrowing Powers) Order, 1907).

89. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the transfer to the Great Western Railway Company of the powers conferred on the Callington Light Railway Company by The Callington Light Railway Order, 1900, as amended by The Callington Light Railway (Extension of Time) Order, 1903, and reviving the powers granted and extending the period limited by the said Orders for the compulsory purchase of lands, and extending the period limited by the said Orders for the completion of the Railway and Works thereby authorised (Callington Light Railway (Amendment and Transfer) Order, 1907).

90. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, transferring to a Company the powers conferred upon the Rural District Councils of Escrick and of Riccall by The Derwent Valley Light Railway Order, 1902, and amending that Order (Derwent Valley

Light Railway (Transfer, etc.) Order, 1907.

91. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and confirmed by the Board of Trade, amending The Dartford District Light Railways Order, 1903 (Dartford District Light Railways (Amendment and Extension of Time) Order, 1907).

92. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the East and West Yorkshire Union Railways Company to exercise further borrowing powers (East and West Yorkshire Union Light Railway (Borrowing Powers) Order, 1907).

93. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of additional Light Railways in the borough of Maidstone (Maidstone Corporation Light Railways (Extensions) (No. 2) Order, 1907).

94. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, reviving the powers granted and extending the period limited by The Cromarty and Dingwall Light Railway Order, 1902, for the compulsory purchase of Lands, and extending the period limited by that Order for the completion of the Railway and Works by that Order authorised, and authorising a deviation of part of the said Railway, and the compulsory purchase of certain Lands for the purposes of the said Railway, and Works (Cromarty and Dingwall Light Railway (Extension of Time, Deviation, and Amendment) Order, 1907).

95. Irish Land Commission (Proceedings).—Copy of Return of Proceedings of the Irish Land Commission under the Land Law Acts, the Labourers (Ireland) Acts, 1883 to 1891, and the Land Purchase Acts, during the months of July, August, September, October, and November, 1907.

96. Irish Land Commission.—Copy of Return of Advances made under The Irish Land Act, 1903, during the month of January, 1907.

97. Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887 (Eviction Notices).—Copy of Return under Section 7 of the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887, of the number of Eviction Notices filed in the High Court of Justice and County Courts in Ireland during the quarter ended on the 30th September, 1907.

98. Banking, Railway, and Shipping Statistics (Ireland).—Copy of Report on the Banking, Railway, and Shipping Statistics of Ireland for the half-year ended 30th June, 1907.

99. Evictions (Ireland).—Copy of Return of Evictions in Ireland for the quarter ended 30th September, 1907.

100. National Education (Ireland).—Copy of Appendix to the Seventy-third Report of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland, being for the year 1906–7. Section II.

101. National Education (Ireland).—Copy of Appendix to the Seventy-third Report of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland, being for the year 1906–7. Section III.

102. Agricultural Statistics (Ireland).—Copy of Abstracts showing the acreage under Crops and the number of Live Stock in each county and province of Ireland, for the year 1906–7.

103. Agricultural Statistics (Ireland).—Copy of Agricultural Statistics of Ireland, with detailed Report for the year 1906.

104. Agricultural Statistics (Ireland).—Copy of Return of Prices of Crops, Live Stock, and other Irish Agricultural Products for the year 1906.

105. Irish Railways (Viceregal Commission).—Copy of Second Report of the Viceregal Commissioners on Irish Railways, and Appendix.

106. Congested Districts Board (Ireland).—Copy of Sixteenth Report of the Congested Districts Board (Ireland), being for the year ending 31st March, 1907.

107. Inebriates Acts (Ireland).—Copy of Third Report, with Appendices, of the Inspector for Ireland under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1900, being for the year 1906.

108. National Education (Ireland).—Copy of Section I. of the Appendix to the Seventy-third Report of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland, for the year 1906–7.

109. Lunacy (Ireland).—Copy of Fifty-sixth Report, with Appendices, of Inspectors of Lunatics (Ireland), for the year 1906.

110. Births, Deaths, and Marriages.—Copy of Sixty-ninth Annual Report of the Registrar-General of Births, Deaths, and Marriages in England and Wales, 1906.

111. Peterhead Harbour.—Copy of Reports respecting Peterhead Harbour Works.

112. North Sea Fisheries Investigation Committee.—Copy of Second Report (Southern Area) on Fishery and Hydrographical Investigations in the North Sea and adjacent waters, 1904–5. Part I.

113. Board of Education (Special Reports).—Copies of Special Reports on Educational Subjects. Vol. 18. The Education and Training of the French Primary School Teacher. Vol. 19. School Training for the Home Duties of Women. Vol. 21. School Excursions and Vacation Schools.

114. Board of Education.—Copies of Reports from Universities and University Colleges in Great Britain participating in the Parliamentary Grant, 1907.

115. Board of Education.—Copy of Report on Charitable Endowments appropriated to elementary education in the administrative county of Kent.

116. Board of Education.—Copy of Official Correspondence relating to the payment of Teachers' Salaries in Merionethshire.

117. Board of Education.—Copy of General Report on the Instruction and Training of Pupil Teachers in Wales (including Monmouthshire).

118. Board of Education.—Copy of Statistics of Public Education in England and Wales, 1905–6–7.

119. Board of Education.—Copy of Regulations providing for Special Grants in aid of certain Local Education Authorities in England and Wales, 1907–8.

120. Board of Education.—Copy of Report of the Board of Education for the year 1906–7.

121. Board of Education.—Copy of Building Regulations for Secondary Schools and Pupil Teacher Centres, being principles to be observed in designing and fitting up new buildings, rules as to construction, etc., and certain requirements as to Plans, Specifications, and Estimates.

122. Education (Scotland).—Copy of Memorandum on the Study of History in Scottish Schools.

123. Secondary Education (Scotland).—Copy of Report on Secondary Education in Scotland for the year 1907, by J. Struthers, esquire, C.B., LL.D.

124. Fishery Board (Scotland).—Copy of Twenty-fifth Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland, being for the year 1906. Part III. Scientific Investigations.

125. Inebriates Acts (Inspector's Report) (Scotland).—Copy of Report of the Inspector for Scotland under the Inebriates Acts for the year 1906.

126. Unemployed Workmen Act, 1905.—Copy of Report of the Local Government Board for Scotland as to the proceedings of Distress Committees in Scotland for the year ended 15th May, 1907.

127. Judicial Statistics (Scotland).—Copy of Report on the Judicial Statistics of Scotland for the year 1906.

128. House-letting (Scotland) (Departmental Committee).—Copy of Report to the Secretary for Scotland of the Departmental Committee on House-letting in Scotland. Vol. II. Minutes of Evidence, Appendices, and Index.

Ordered, That the said Papers do lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877 (CAMBRIDGE).

Copy presented, of Statute made by the Governing Body of Peterhouse or St. Peter's College, Cambridge, on the 4th May, 1907, altering and amending Statute XXI. of the Statutes of the College [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 1.]

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877 (OXFORD).

Copy presented, of Statute made by the Governing Body of Trinity College, Oxford, on the 27th May, 1907, altering and amending Statute I. of the Statutes of the College [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 2.]

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877 (OXFORD).

Copy presented, of Statute made by the Governing Body of Queen's College, Oxford, on the 19th June, 1907, altering and amending Stat. Tit. II., Clauses 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, and 15, and Stat. Tit. XXIII., Clause 8, of the Statutes of the College [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 3.]

FOREIGN JURISDICTION ACT.

Copies presented, of Order in Council, dated 9th September, 1907, entitled The Nigeria Coinage Order in Council, 1907; Orders in Council, dated 2nd November, 1907, (1) providing for the exercise of His Majesty's Jurisdiction in the Islands of the Pacific Ocean known as the New Hebrides, in accordance with the terms of the Anglo-French Convention; (2) entitled The East Africa Order in Council, 1907; (3) entitled The North Eastern Rhodesia Order in Council, 1907; (4) entitled The Swaziland Crown Lands Order in Council, 1907—Order in Council, dated 21st December, 1907, entitled The Nyassaland Order in Council, 1907 (No. 2) [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894.

Copies presented, of Orders in Council, dated 2nd November, 1907:—(1) relating to seamen's lodging houses in the district of the county borough of Swansea; (2) confirming bye-laws made by the Trinity House of Kingston-upon-Hull, fixing the rates of pilotage between Hull and Goole; (3) applying Section 238 of the Act to seamen who desert from Roumanian merchant ships; (4) revoking Orders in Council of 3rd February, 1863, and 7th January, 1864, made under The Passengers Act, 1855, respecting the carriage of emigrants on board ship [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES ACT, 1878.

Copies presented, of Orders in Council, dated 21st December, 1907:—(1) defining the amount of error to be tolerated in local standards when verified or re-verified by the Board of Trade; (2) fixing the fees to be paid in respect of the verification and stamping of Weights and Measures [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

NAVAL DISCIPLINE ACT, 1866.

Copy presented, of Order in Council, dated 2nd November, 1907, approving certain Revised General Orders for regulating the Procedure and Practice of Naval Courts-martial, to come into force on 1st April, 1908 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

NAVAL AND MARINE PAY AND PENSIONS ACT, 1865.

Copies presented, of Sixteen Orders in Council made under The Naval and Marine Pay and Pensions Act, 1865 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

COLONIAL PRISONERS' REMOVAL ACT, 1884.

Copy presented, of Order in Council entitled the Colonial Prisoners' Removal Order in Council, 1907, dated 9th September, 1907 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ACT, 1858.

Copy presented, of Order in Council, dated 21st December, 1907, approving a Statement of new and revised appointments and alterations of salaries in the establishment of the Secretary of State for India in Council [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS, 1894 TO 1903.

Copy presented, of an Order, dated 23rd August, 1907, entitled the Glanders or Farcy Order of 1907 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS, 1894 TO 1903.

Copy presented, of an Order, dated 26th August, 1907, defining a Foreign Animals Quarantine Station at the Port of Liverpool [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS, 1894 TO 1903.

Copy presented, of an Order, dated 13th September, 1907, defining a Foreign Animals Quarantine Station at the Royal Albert Docks, in the Port of London [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS, 1894 TO 1903.

Copy presented, of an Order, dated 19th September, 1907, revoking Order No. 7324 of 26th August, 1907, defining a Foreign Animals Quarantine Station at the Port of Liverpool [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS, 1894 TO 1903.

Copy presented, of an Order, dated 23rd October, 1907, revoking Order No. 7335 of 13th September, 1907, defining a Foreign Animals Quarantine Station in the Borough of East Ham [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS, 1894 TO 1903.

Copy presented, of an Order, dated 28th November, 1907, revoking Order No. 6682 of 15th May, 1903, defining a Foreign Animals Wharf at the Port of Southampton [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SHOP HOURS ACT, 1904.

Copies presented, of Orders made by the Councils of the Boroughs of Macclesfield, Widnes, Haslingden, Burslem, Cheltenham, Rawtenstall, Thornaby-on-Tees, Shoreditch, Stepney, the County Boroughs of Halifax and Preston, the Urban Districts of Tunstall and Llanelly, the Counties of East Suffolk, Surrey (2), Lancaster (2), West Suffolk, Chester, and the West Riding of Yorkshire, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the Hours of Closing for certain classes of Shops [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).

Copy presented, of Licence to be at large granted to John Williams or Taylor, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A of The Penal Servitude Act, 1864 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACTS (DANGEROUS AND UNHEALTHY INDUSTRIES).

Copy presented, of Regulations, dated 28th August, 1907, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in pursuance of Section 79 of The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, for the processes of Spinning and Weaving Hemp or Jute or Hemp or Jute Tow, and processes incidental thereto [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACTS (DANGEROUS AND UNHEALTHY INDUSTRIES).

Copy presented, of Regulations, dated 13th December, 1907, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in pursuance of Section 79 of The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, for the manufacture of nitro and amido-derivatives of Benzine, and the manufacture of explosives with use of Dinitrobenzol or Dinitroluol [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACTS (DANGEROUS AND UNHEALTHY INDUSTRIES).

Copy presented, of Regulations, dated 20th December, 1907, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in pursuance of Section 79 of The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, in respect of processes involving the use of Horsehair from China, Siberia, and Russia [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

POLLING DISTRICTS (CITY OF BATH).

Copy presented, of Order made by the Council of the City of Bath, altering certain Polling Districts in Lincombe and Widcombe and Walcot Wards in the city [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

WAGES AND EFFECTS OF DECEASED SEAMEN.

Account presented, of the Sums received and paid in respect of the Wages and Effects of Deceased Seamen in the year ended 31st March, 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 4.]

ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACTS, 1882 AND 1888 (LONDON ELECTRICITY SUPPLY)

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 22nd August, 1907; *Mr.*

Lloyd-George]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 5.]

RAMSGATE HARBOUR.

Copy presented, of Statement of the Receipts and Payments for the year ended 31st March, 1907, together with an Account of the Receipt and Issue of Stores [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 6.]

SEAMEN'S SAVINGS BANKS (MONEY ORDERS AND TRANSMISSION OF WAGES).

Accounts presented, of all Deposits received and repaid during the year ended 20th November, 1906, and Statement as to Money Orders issued and paid from 1855 to 31st March, 1907, and of Receipts and Payments in connection with the Transmission of Seamen's Wages from 1878 to 31st March, 1907 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 7.]

GENERAL LIGHTHOUSE FUND.

Account presented, of the General Lighthouse Fund, showing the Income and Expenditure for the year ended 31st March, 1907 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 8.]

WEST HIGHLAND RAILWAY (EXTENSION FROM BANAVIE TO MALLAIG).

Copy presented, of Sixth Annual Report of the Board of Trade as to the condition and working of the Banavie and Mallaig Railway, the rates and charges for traffic, and the receipts and expenditure of any Company in working the Railway, for the year ended 1906–7 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 9.]

PATENTS AND DESIGNS ACT, 1907.

Copy presented, of Rules made by the Board of Trade under The Patents and Designs Act, 1907 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION.

Copy presented, of Rules of the Estates Commissioners, dated 4th November, 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

NAVY (GUNNERY).

Copy presented, of Result of Test of Gun-layers with Heavy Guns in His Majesty's Fleet, 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SECOND BALLOT IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES (MISCELLANEOUS, No. 2, 1908).

Copy presented, of Reports from His Majesty's Representatives Abroad showing the Regulations and Methods which guide the application of the Second Ballot at Elections in Foreign Countries [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CHILDREN UNDER THE POOR LAW.

Copy presented of Report to the President of the Local Government Board on Children under the Poor Law, by Dr. Macnamara, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary to the Board [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY (PENSIONS).

Copy presented, of Return showing the names of all Constabulary Officers now in receipt of Pensions, of all Head Constables, Sergeants, and Constables, and of all Widows and Children, to whom Pensions have been granted since the Constabulary Estimate for 1907–8 was prepared, with the amount and date of Pension in each case [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1887.

Copies presented, of Treasury Minutes granting a retired allowance to each of the following, viz.: Charles Barwick, Rural Postman, Scarborough Post Office; Mr. T. O. Hewitt, Engineer, First Class, Engineer-in-Chief's Department, Post Office; Mr. T. S. Williams, Counter Clerk and Telegraphist, London Postal District, Post Office; Mr. W. L. Mowll, Overseer, Post Office, Brighton; Mr. F. Westington, Overseer, Post Office. Brighton; Mr. H. E. Köhler, Overseer, Post Office, Brighton; Mr. T. F. Hart, Assistant Superintendent, Post Office, Brighton; Mr. Owen Cook, Second Class, Surveyor of Taxes, Inland Revenue; Mr. F. T. Freeman, Staff Clerk, War Office; Mr. W. R. Barton, a Clerk of the Higher Grade of the Second Division, War Office; Mr. John Guillon, Foreman of the Yard, Chatham, Admiralty; Walter Charles Bass, Established Butler, Haslar Hospital, Admiralty [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1884.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 5th September, 1907, declaring that Henry Harris, Labourer, Royal Laboratory, War Department, was appointed without a Civil Service Certificate through inadvertence on the part of the Head of his Department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATIONS.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 21st November, 1907, declaring that for the due and efficient discharge of the duties of the office of Small Holdings Commissioner, professional or other peculiar qualifications not ordinarily to be acquired in the Public Serviec are required [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATION.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 28th October, 1907, granting a special pension to Sir H. W. Primrose, K.C.B., C.S.I., I.S.O., late Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

TREASURY CHEST.

Account presented, for the year 1906–7, together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 10.]

BANK OF ENGLAND.

Copy presented, of Return of the amount of Notes issued more than forty years which have not been presented for payment, and which have been written off on the 13th November, 1907, from the total amount of Notes issued from the Issue Department of the Bank of England [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC WORKS (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 11th December, 1907, authorising the renewal of the lease of two small plots of land near the Royal Marine Hotel, Kingstown [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

INLAND REVENUE.

Copy presented, of Treasury Warrants, dated 5th December, 1907, appointing Mr. George Frederick Howe and Mr. Albert Grasemann to be Special Commissioners of Income Tax [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND CHARGES ACT, 1891.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 16th December, 1907, directing that, as from the 1st April, 1908, the receipts under Section 28 (9) of The Merchant Shipping Act, 1906, shall be applied as appropriations in aid of the moneys to be granted by Parliament for Mercantile Marine Services [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

LABOURERS (IRELAND) ACT, 1906.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 6th January, 1908, directing that the Labourers' Cottages Fund Account be examined and audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

COUNTY COURTS (ENGLAND) (FEES).

Copy presented, of Treasury Order, dated 22nd October, 1907, regulating Fees in County Courts [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' DEFERRED ANNUITY FUND.

Copy presented, of First Septennial Actuarial Report on the Assets and Liabilities of the Elementary School Teachers' Deferred Annuity Fund [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 11].

MOTOR CAR ACTS.

Copies presented, of Orders by the Secretary for Scotland prohibiting Motor Car traffic on certain Highways in the Counties of Perth and Wigtown [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

LUNACY (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of General Rules for the Management of the Kingseat Asylum at Newmachar, Aberdeen [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

LUNACY (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of General Rules for the Government of the Asylum, Riccartsbar, Paisley [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SHOP HOURS ACT, 1904.

Copies presented, of Orders made by the Secretary for Scotland providing for the early closing of certain shops in the burghs of Dundee and Perth, and in the Shettlestone and Tollcross Special Lighting District, in the county of Lanark [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1889 (ORDINANCE).

Copy presented, of University Court Ordinance No. XXII. (Edinburgh, No. 11) (Regulations for Degrees in Arts) [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 12.]

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1889 (ORDINANCE).

Copy presented, of University Court Ordinance, No. XXIII. (Glasgow, No. 6) (Regulations for Degrees in Arts) [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 13.]

UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW.

Copy presented, of Annual Statistical Report by the University Court of the University of Glasgow for 1906–7 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 14.]

EAST INDIA (LOANS RAISED IN ENGLAND).

Copy presented, of Return of all Loans raised in England, chargeable on the Revenues of India, outstanding at the commencement of the half-year ending on the 30th September, 1907, etc. [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 15.]

EAST INDIA (LOANS RAISED IN INDIA).

Copy presented, of Return of all Loans raised in India, chargeable on the Revenues of India, outstanding at the commencement of the half-year ending on the 30th September, 1907, etc. [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 16.]

MERCHANT SHIPPING.

Copy presented, of Correspondence relating to the proposed legislation of Australia and New Zealand on the subject of Merchant Shipping [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUEENSLAND.

Copy presented, of Papers relative to the Working of Taxation on the Unimproved Value of Land in Queensland [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

COMPULSORY NATIVE LABOUR (COLONIES).

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 27th March, 1907; *Mr. Molteno*]; to lie upon the Table.

TRINIDAD.

Copy presented, of Rules for the Government of District Prisons, and Amended Rules providing for punishment of Officials for Breaches of Discipline, in Trinidad [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Copy presented, of List of Public Elementary Schools and Certified Efficient Schools in England (excluding Monmouthshire) on 1st August, 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Copy presented, of Amending Order No. 3, amending Final Order No. 42, made under Section 11 (8) of The Education Act, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 17.]

POSTAL AGREEMENT (JAPAN).

Copy presented, of Postal Agreement for the exchange of Postal Parcels between the Post Office of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the Post Office of the Empire of Japan, dated 31st January, 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

POSTAL AGREEMENT (SALVADOR.)

Copy presented, of Postal Agreement for an exchange of Money Orders between the Post Office of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the Post Office of the Republic of Salvador, dated 27th June and 27th August, 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

POSTAL AGREEMENT (CURACAO).

Copy presented, of Agreement between the Post Office of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the Post Office of the Dutch Colony of Curacao for the Exchange of Money

Orders, dated 25th April and 15th June, 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

POSTAL AGREEMENT (SURINAM).

Copy presented, of Additional Articles to the Postal Agreement for an Exchange of Money Orders between the Post Office of Great Britain and Ireland and the Post Office of the Dutch Colony of Surinam, dated the 28th October and 2nd December, 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

POST OFFICE (FOREIGN AND COLONIAL PARCEL POST).

Copy presented, of the Foreign and Colonial Parcel Post Amendment (No. 10) Warrant, 1907, dated 12th September, 1907 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

POST OFFICE (FOREIGN AND COLONIAL PARCEL POST).

Copy presented, of the Foreign and Colonial Parcel Post Amendment (No. 11) Warrant, 1907, dated 16th September, 1907 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

POST OFFICE (FOREIGN AND COLONIAL PARCEL POST).

Copy presented, of the Foreign and Colonial Parcel Post Amendment (No. 12) Warrant, 1907, dated 18th September, 1907 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

POST OFFICE (FOREIGN AND COLONIAL PARCEL POST).

Copy presented, of the Foreign and Colonial Parcel Post Amendment (No. 12) Warrant, 1907, dated 10th January 1908 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

POST OFFICE (FOREIGN AND COLONIAL POST EXCEPT PARCELS).

Copy presented, of Treasury Warrant, dated 30th September 1907, as to the Foreign and Colonial Post except Parcels [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

POST OFFICE TELEGRAPHS, INCLUDING TELEPHONES.

Account presented, showing the gross amount received and expended on account of the Telegraph Service during the year ended 31st March, 1907, etc. [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 18.]

PAPERS LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

1. Lunacy.—Copy of Report to the Lord Chancellor of the number of Visits made, the number of Patients seen, and the number of Miles travelled by the Visitors of Lunatics between 1st April and 30th September, 1907 [by Act].

2. Lunacy.—Copy of Return of all sums received by the Visitors of Lunatics for travelling expenses, or upon any other account, from 1st January to 31st December, 1907 [by Act].

3. Public Trustee (Rules).—Copy of the Public Trustee Rules, 1907, dated 29th November, 1907 [by Act].

4. Shipping Casualties (Rules).—Copy of General Rules for formal investigations into Shipping Casualties and appeals and re-hearings, dated 22nd November, 1907 [by Act].

5. Mersey Docks and Harbour Board.—Copy of Accounts of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board for the year ending 1st July, 1907 [by Act].

6. Public Records (High Court of Justice).—Copy of Second Schedule containing a List and Particulars of Classes of Documents belonging to the late Courts of King's Bench, Common Pleas, and Exchequer, and the succeeding King's Bench, Common Pleas, and Exchequer Divisions of the High Court of Justice, which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office [by Act].

7. Public Records (War Department).—Copy of Seventh Schedule containing a List and Particulars of Classes of Documents pertaining to the Department of His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for War, which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office [by Act].

NOTICES OF MOTION.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) gave notice that on the earliest possible opportunity he would move the following Resolution:—"That the present system of Government in Ireland is in opposition to the will of the Irish people, and gives them no voice in the management of their own affairs; that the system is consequently inefficient and extravagantly costly; that it does not enjoy the confidence of any section of the population; that it is productive of universal discontent and unrest and is incapable of satisfactorily promoting the material and intellectual progress of the people; that the reform of Irish Government is a matter vital to the interests of Ireland and calculated greatly to promote the well-being of the people of Great Britain; and that in the opinion of this House the solution of this problem can only be attained by giving to the Irish people legislative and executive control of all purely Irish affairs." He further gave notice that on Monday he would ask the Prime Minister whether he would afford adequate facilities for the discussion of this Motion.

The following notices of Motion were given for an early day:—

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.): To move for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Licensing Acts.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): To move for leave to introduce a Bill to regulate the conditions on which public money may be applied in aid of elementary education in England and Wales, and for other purposes incidental thereto.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): To ask leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Coal Mines Regulation Acts for the purpose of limiting the hours of workmen below ground.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY TO THE LORD-LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): To ask leave to introduce a Bill to amend and extend higher education in Ireland; also a Bill to amend the Land Purchase (Ireland) Act, 1903, in certain particulars, and especially with reference to the compulsory acquisition of untenanted land.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): To ask leave to introduce a Bill to amend the law relating to the housing of the working classes, and to provide for the making of schemes for laying out land needed for urban development.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): To ask leave to introduce a Bill for the improvement and better administration of the Port of London.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): To ask leave to bring in a Bill to extend the Military Land Acts to naval and marine Volunteers.

KING'S SPEECH.

Mr. SPEAKER reported His Majesty's Speech, and read it to the House.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS IN REPLY).

*MR. LEHMANN (Leicester, Market Harborough): It is with an unaffected sense of the difficulty and responsible character of my task that I rise to move that a humble address of thanks be presented to His Majesty for his gracious Speech from the Throne, but I am sustained by the certain knowledge that in discharging this duty to the best of my ability I may count upon the generous indulgence of the House. I think if I might permit myself to characterise any portion of His Majesty's gracious Speech I should say that the distinctive note of the first part is one of peace and good will upon earth. It is a matter of the most profound and lively gratitude to us that His Majesty should be enabled to say that his relations with all Foreign Powers continue to be friendly. In that phrase we have the assurance that this nation, undisturbed by the fear of war, may continue to devote its energies and its resources to the task of peaceful consolidation and civic progress. We have all followed with keen sympathy and appreciation His Majesty's unwearying efforts on behalf of the great cause of international friendship and good will, and we realise how deeply we are indebted to him. In this connection it is a matter of special gratification to us to know that the recent visit of the German Emperor and Empress to this country, while it was mainly of a private and unofficial character, has through the friendly warmth displayed on both sides produced results so eminently satisfactory to ourselves and to the German people. It must be the earnest hope of all patriotic men, both here and in Germany, that the friendly relations thus confirmed may never be weakened by mistrust or embittered by an animosity for which there is no warrant in the past history or present situation of the two countries. The announcement of the steps taken for the protection of Norway are specially agreeable to all who see in the peaceful and progressive development of the smaller nationalities one of the brightest hopes for the future of mankind. We rejoiced over the peaceful entry of Norway into the family of European nations, and we rejoice no less over the assurance thus given to her position and her prospects. I most heartily wish it were possible to speak in terms of warmer enthusiasm of the actual results achieved by the second Peace Conference at the Hague. Some of us cherished ardent hopes that it might be found possible by some form of agreement to limit armaments and thus to diminish the tremendous burden which weighs upon the peoples of the world. We have been forced to realise with deep regret that this has not been possible, but at the same time we must, I think, admit that the failure in this respect was in no way due to any lack of energy or initiative either on the part of His Majesty's Government or of the distinguished representatives of His Majesty at the Conference. No nation accepts these burdens joyfully; each submits to them with reluctance and from a sense of overpowering necessity, the pressure of which can only be removed by some kind of international agreement. At the same time I think we may congratulate ourselves that the principle at least of an International Court of Appeal in Prize Cases has been established. Such a Court, with the authority which it must necessarily command, will at any rate remove one of the chief causes that tend to drag nations into quarrels with which they have primarily no concern. If, as I hope, the Conference in London, of which His Majesty has spoken, takes place, we may look to it to set up on a firm basis the code of international law by which the Court itself will be guided in its deliberations. At the same time I may be permitted to express the hope that the occasion for such deliberations may not soon arise. There is one dark cloud over the outlook in Europe, and that arises from unhappy Macedonia. Even if we wished it, we in this country cannot avoid our share—our heavy share—of the responsibility for what is taking place in Macedonia. It is in no small measure due to the course of action taken by this country nearly thirty years ago that Macedonia owes her present condition, given up to anarchy, and having, it appears, little to hope for from the unassisted action of the Power that controls her destinies. Here again, I realise that it is only by agreement between the great Powers concerned that any amelioration can be brought about, but I venture to urge, too, that this amelioration is long overdue. We shall look forward with lively interest to the disclosure of the further proposals made by His Majesty's Government, both to the Sultan and to the other Great Powers concerned. With regard to India I can only say I have heard with profound concern and distress His Majesty's words about that country. At the same time I am perfectly confident that everything that can be done here will be done to assist those whose duty it will be to grapple with the famine on the spot and to bring relief to the sufferers.

Before I pass to the consideration, for a few brief moments, of the legislative programme unfolded to us in His Majesty's gracious Speech I should like to say a few words with regard to the loss which this House has sustained since we were last here. I refer to the death of the Attorney-General, Sir John Lawson Walton. Sir John was an old friend of my own. We had known one another from our early days at the Bar, and since then I have followed his career with admiration—admiration for his firm grasp of principle, his extraordinary mastery over detail and his wonderful power of lucid exposition. But there was something more than that; there was something in the genial and friendly character of the man that endeared him to the hearts of all with whom he was brought into contact in this House. It must be some consolation, I think, to those more intimately connected with him who mourn his loss to reflect how highly he was appreciated here and how affectionately we cherish his memory.

I especially welcome in the legislative programme which has been unfolded to us the words in which it is stated that proposals will be brought forward for making better provision for old age. In principle I take it there is no difference between the various sections of this House as to the desirability of some measure of old age pensions. A considerable number of years have passed since the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, whose continued absence from our debates we all deplore, brought this proposal into a region closely adjoining that of practical politics. Since then it has been discussed throughout the country. It is most ardently desired by the great mass of our population, and we are glad to know that His Majesty's Government propose to embody it in a practical form so that men who have played their part in building up the State by their toil, often under hard and barely tolerable conditions, may hope when old age and weakness have sapped their energies that the State will at last make some acknowledgment of their efforts. With regard to licensing, I hope it will be possible, indeed, I believe it will be possible without injustice to anyone, to frame and to pass a scheme by which the nation will receive its due share of a monopoly value and by which something will be done to further the cause of temperance. With regard to education, two principles will, at any rate, we may be certain, be embodied in any Bill that may be brought forward, and these are that where a school is supported by public money there must be full public control, and secondly, that in that school there must be no religious test for teachers of any grade. I should have liked to refer to the measure which is to be brought in extending and reforming University education in Ireland and to have said something about the housing proposals which are the necessary complement of the land legislation passed last session, but I am warned that I have trespassed long enough on the attention and indulgence of the House. Before I resume my seat, however, I should like to thank the House very earnestly for the kindness and consideration it has shown me in the task I have performed. I beg to move.

*MR. W. H. DAVIES (Bristol, S.) said he esteemed it a high honour to be asked to second the Motion both to the city he represented and to the municipal life in which he had been so long engaged. He was sure the House welcomed the return of the Prime Minister to health, though his brother's affliction kept him away from attendance. They could not feel any surprise at the reference in His Majesty's Speech to the condition of affairs existing on the Congo, for the humane feelings of this country had been deeply stirred by the atrocities that were reported to have taken place there. If the experience of every Member of the House had been similar to his, there must have been thousands of resolutions passed in this country, urging the Government to intervene for the protection of the native population, and he could but sincerely hope that the Government, would watch the proposals for the change of Government, now being made, to ensure the intentions of the Berlin Act were carried into effect. He wished to say one word with respect to one of our very old Colonies, the Colony of Newfoundland, in regard to which there had been many diplomatic questions which successive Governments had had to face. He hoped that the Government might succeed in getting the United States to agree to the proposals they had made, and that the remaining fishery disputes might be referred to the International Court of Arbitration at the Hague. He was quite satisfied that any settlement which might be arrived at by such means would afford far more satisfaction to the Colony than any endeavour to settle international relations by the direct intervention of the Imperial authorities in London. They were reminded in the Speech from the Throne of the failure of rain and the likelihood of famine in one of the great centres of the Empire; he referred to India. That was a matter which all must regret. It was remarkable how little the people of this country heard of the devastating famines which occurred from time to time in this portion of our great Empire. Anything of a sensational character was telegraphed to London from India at considerable length; for example, an indiscreet utterance of a Labour leader provoked long telegrams and much comment in our public Press; but of this famine tragedy affecting millions of our Indian fellow-subjects who were perishing for want of food, little was heard. It was, however, satisfactory to know that our countrymen in India were attacking plague and famine with determination and courage, and that Britons were doing their duty under depressing conditions, and were, indeed, shewing themselves the heroes of peace, deserving to have their services recognised as they had been in the gracious Speech from the Throne. If it were possible the House would be only too glad to send a message of sympathy to our stricken fellow-subjects in India, expressing the hope that their time of tribulation might not be unduly prolonged. The House must be impressed with the variety and importance of the domestic proposals of the Government. They touched the life of the nation at almost every point—youth, middle-age and old age. It was not a subject of surprise that the Government were again returning to the subject of education, because they knew that nearly every Liberal Member at the last election had pledged himself to vote for such an amendment of the Act of 1902 as would bring it more in harmony with the consciences of all classes. Also there were many Members sitting on the Opposition side of the House who had pledged themselves to put forward some Amendments for this purpose. The failure to settle the question in 1906 was not dishonourable to the Government. They had made a brave attempt, but this session they were returning to it in full knowledge that it was a question which bristled with difficulties. He was sure that everyone must desire to see an early and permanent settlement arrived at, as it was embittering associations within the Christian Church which should be friendly and cordial, and by long unsettlement the question tended towards the exclusion of the Bible from the day schools of the country. On these grounds he appealed to the House to show a spirit of charity towards the proposals of the Government and to help this long-delayed question to reach the stage of permanent settlement. No Government need apologise for taking up the question of licensing reform, and he thought that any scheme of licensing reform proposed which tended to lessen the drinking temptations of the people would be heartily welcomed and cordially supported. They were all glad that the President of the Local Government Board was proposing to deal with the housing difficulty, both in regard to clearing slum areas in our cities, where bad housing encouraged the drinking habit, and also in rural areas as a complement to the Small Holdings and the Allotments Act of last year. Many of our large cities possessed congested districts which were festering sores in their midst and a disgrace to our civilisation, and anybody who would tackle this question firmly and boldly would win the esteem of his countrymen, while if he could alter the complexion of our cities by doing away with these congested areas altogether he would do more for the country than by adding to the bounds of Empire. He welcomed also the prospect of seeing old-age pensions established. For a long time past responsible politicians had dangled the pension scheme before the old people of the country. These old people had been waiting long and patiently for the fulfilment of the promise; and now the House was glad to learn from the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the foundations of this scheme were to be laid this session and it was to be on a non-contributory basis. The House must realise that many of the old people who had qualified by length of years for such a pension had not worked for what was now recognised as adequate wages, but had given the best of their lives for a very inadequate return indeed. These people had helped to build up the wealth of the Empire and they fully deserved any little pension they might receive. Before concluding he would like to say one or two words about the Bill to be brought in by the President of the Board of Trade dealing with the Port and Waterway of London. Before alluding to that, however, he might be permitted to say how cordially and thankfully the House had welcomed his right hon. friend's intervention in the cause of industrial peace. His right hon. friend would have a difficult task in grappling with the problem of the Port of London, but he was a man of great courage and tact and the House was confident that he would deal with it in a way which would result in great benefit to the interests concerned. The Port of London was not at the present time so fully or so well equipped as many of the ports in the north-west of Europe. A great deal of our trade had been filched from us by reason of inadequate facilities in the Port of London for cheap and quick handling of goods in transit. If the President of the Board of Trade was able to reconcile the varied interests of the Port of London and secure one governing body for this great port he would undoubtedly confer a great benefit on the commerce of the country. He had now only to thank the House for the courteous attention which it had accorded him and to conclude by seconding the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign*,

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Lehmann.*)

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): I am sure that I only express the general sentiment of the House, certainly for hon. Gentlemen on this side, when I offer to the two hon. Members who have moved and seconded the Address in answer to the Speech from the Throne our congratulations on the manner in which they have performed the task—in my opinion, by no means the easiest task that falls to hon. Members in this House. They have carried out their task with great tact and discretion, and they have most scrupulously maintained that ancient and excellent rule which lays it down that the mover and seconder of the Address while fairly holding by their Party feelings should, as far as this occasion is concerned, refrain from a display of the controversial methods which are customary at other times in the debates among us. Both hon. Members have fulfilled their task in a manner which, to us at least, shows that they bore the ancient rule carefully in mind, and they have fully acted up to it. I associate myself with some remarks that fell from the mover of the Address with reference to the late Attorney-General. His tribute to the memory of that distinguished man was graceful and eloquent; and I am sure that it will find an echo, not merely among those who were politically associated with him, but among those who for many years sat opposite to him, and who had in that position, perhaps, as good an opportunity as any who sat near him of appreciating his unfailing courtesy, his fairness to his opponents, and his ability in debate. I am sorry I shall not be able to-day to address myself to the Prime Minister. We all rejoice to hear how much better he is in health, and we look forward to seeing him at no distant date take part in our proceedings. We, however, quite recognise that in all probability he may not be able to take that full share of the conduct of the work of this House which he would naturally desire to take, and if that should unhappily be the case—I hope it will not—he may be assured that so far as we on this side of the House are concerned, we fully understand the situation, and shall do nothing to make the position—which in any case must be difficult—more difficult than it is. I understand that his absence to-day, however, is not due to any failure of health or strength on his part, but to anxieties having a domestic source, in connection with a very old Member of this House, a man who has many friends in this House, many who would feel his loss, although he is no longer among us, very greatly and very deeply, and who recognise his long career of public service both at Westminster and in Scotland. I can especially speak for my Scottish fellow countrymen, who associate themselves with the general feeling of all Scotland, that, in the late Member for Glasgow University, Scotland still possesses one who has done very great service.

If I turn now to the substantive Motion which is before us, I ought perhaps to begin with one or two comments on that part of the Speech which deals with foreign affairs, and the first point on which I should like to say a word is the Anglo-Russian Agreement. I greatly hope that the Government will give this House some opportunity other than that which is afforded by the debate on the Address for discussing this Agreement. There was a day given for the discussion of the Anglo-French Agreement, and I am particularly desirous of abstaining from supporting an Amendment to the Address in this connection, because that at once gives a hostile and a party character to subjects which certainly I do not feel inclined to discuss in a hostile or party sense. I am well aware of the inherent difficulties of framing any Agreement between two great countries as to which there shall not be critics found in both countries who shall say "We have given everything, and we have got nothing." That is the inevitable danger which attaches to all these international arrangements, and it is one against which I wish particularly to guard myself, as I entertain the strongest opinion as to the value which such international Agreements may have in the cause of good relationship, of the easy working of international affairs, and even, in the last resort, in the cause of peace. But I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when I put certain difficulties to him with regard to this Agreement, will feel that we, perhaps, have some right to hear from the Secretary for Foreign Affairs a fuller account of his objects and of the way in which these objects may be attained, than is contained in the despatches laid before Parliament, and that we should also have an opportunity of developing difficulties and criticisms which I shall now briefly indicate, without, I hope, unduly pressing him. It is not very easy to see what it is that has been exchanged between Russia and Great Britain. It is clear that we have given up or abandoned certain positions which we occupied, but it is not clear that the Russians, so far as I am aware, have abandoned any position that they have ever occupied. That may or may not be a serious matter, but there are aspects of it which suggest serious consideration. For example, Persia has been divided by the Agreement into three zones: one that may be described as the Russian zone; one that may be described as the British zone; and an intermediate space which may be described as the neutral zone. We have, quite apart from the military and defensive interests which we have in Afghanistan and India, great trading interests in Persia, and, to those of my friends who have looked into this matter, it appears as if the terminations of all the great trade routes in which our trade is interested have been by this arrangement placed within the Russian sphere, and to be placed within the Russian sphere means, and is intended to mean, that under certain circumstances they shall be placed under the dominating control of Russia. If anybody will study the map, he will see that I have not over-stated the case. I have certainly no desire to over-state the case, but I suggest that it gives considerable anxiety from the trading point of view. I would specially notice that there is nothing in the whole arrangement between us and Russia which suggests that the interests of open markets have been carefully kept in view by the Government in relation to the great outlet for Indian and British goods which Persia supplies. There is an arrangement that Russia and Britain are to be on equal terms with regard to any trade or commercial interests in Afghanistan, but I see nothing in this Convention which preserves the interests of British trade in Persia, while I see that the interests of that trade are apparently and on the face of it threatened by the fact that within the limits of the Russian sphere of influence are all the great terminations of these great trade routes, which are now occupied by British and by

Indian enterprise and commerce. I am frankly puzzled by the arrangements about Tibet. My own view about Tibet is that the less we or Russia have to do with it the better. While, of course, we could tolerate no European power in Tibet, still the last thing I personally should advise any Government to do unless absolutely driven to it, is to interfere in the internal affairs of Tibet. It is a fact that Tibet is on our frontier, and it is not always easy to avoid having relations with a nation on our frontier, but Tibet is 2,000 miles from the nearest part of Russia, and it is a little puzzling to see why no distinction should be drawn in this Convention between the position of Russia as regards Tibet, and the position of this country. There is one other point on which I hope something will be said by the Government, not necessarily to-day, and that is connected with the Persian Gulf. Everybody knows—nobody better than the Secretary for India and the Secretary for Foreign Affairs—the position which successive British Governments have taken up with regard to the Persian Gulf. There is nothing said in the body of the agreement with Russia about the Persian Gulf at all. There is mention made of the Persian Gulf in the covering letter of the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, in which he informs us that he has repeated to Russia what has often been said to that great country before, that we take the keenest interest in all affairs of the Gulf, and Russia appears to have given a verbal kind of negative assurance that it does not dissent. I have not got the exact words, but it is a very negative kind of agreement or assent to the statement of the Secretary of State. The whole purpose of this Agreement with Russia is to place formally upon record an international instrument or treaty on certain matters which might conceivably cause a division of opinion or friction between the two Empires. Is it not unfortunate that we should have excluded from this formal treaty, and left in the relatively obscure position of a mere verbal statement, something which has always been regarded as so vitally affecting the Imperial interests of this country? We have had plenty of verbal statements from Russia with regard to her relations with Afghanistan and Persia, and they have not been considered sufficient by the right hon. Gentleman, not because he wishes to throw doubt upon the trustworthiness of Russian statements, but because I believe, in the view of Russian diplomatists themselves, there is a great distinction to be drawn between a formal treaty and a mere diplomatic and verbal assurance. Then why is a diplomatic and verbal assurance the only thing given us with regard to the Persian gulf? Why has the Persian Gulf been excluded from the formal treaty, and left in the admittedly unsatisfactory position from which this Agreement was intended to rescue it? These are difficulties which I venture very respectfully to put to the right hon. Gentleman and to the Secretary for Foreign Affairs. There is one other point in connection with foreign affairs on which I must speak, and that is the Conference at The Hague. I think it was the hon. Gentleman who moved the address who frankly stated how far short of his expectations and the expectations of many of his friends the actual results of that Conference had fallen. We must all recognise that those who anticipated some international arrangement which would relieve us of our great burdens of defence must indeed be bitterly disappointed. I confess I never was one of the number. I attach the greatest value to what was done in past times at The Hague. I am an optimist in regard to international relations in the future. I believe the great work, dating back for many years, and which the late Government had the good fortune greatly to develop, of international arbitration, has already prevented, and will in the future prevent more and more, wars which do not spring out of intolerable wrong or causes which a nation feels cannot be dealt with by any third party or any arbitrator, however well intended. These wars are few and they are diminishing; but others arising out of smaller matters of friction which may defeat the best-intentioned Government will be more and more dealt with in the future by those principles which have been embodied in the growing number of cases which I rejoice to think have been made the subject of international arrangement.

But, while I am a great believer in this international arrangement, I think we are still far removed from the ideal which the Government in their most sanguine moment cherished for The Hague Conference. What is the solitary result of that Conference? Or, at all events, what is the only result which the Government have thought it worth while to embody in the Speech from the Throne? It is the adoption of an instrument "establishing the great principle of an International Court of Appeal in prize cases." Has not The Hague Conference in this matter put the cart before the horse? They have established the principle, as they call it, of an international tribunal; but they have not established the law which that tribunal is to interpret. And that is absolutely of the greatest importance to this country, which, whether we look at it from the point of view of the neutral—a position which I hope we shall always occupy in war—or from the point of view of a possible belligerent, is more than any other nation concerned in the administration of the law of belligerent rights at sea. I am the last person to say that the existing laws do not require amending. They have become in many cases antiquated through the mere alteration of the conditions which govern sea commerce, through the growth in the size of ships, which makes the investigation as to their contents a matter of extreme difficulty, through the fact that the great lines of mail steamers have become the commercial arteries joining different parts of the world, through the fact that steam has taken the place of sails, through all those changes and the immense industrial revolution which have made the existing conditions of maritime commerce absolutely different from those which prevailed during the great war when the law was determined. I cannot say, therefore, that the existing system does not require to be amended. But you do not say that you will be able to settle a revised code. On a given occasion, as I understand it, the tribunal will set to work to do its best with the existing law, about which there is great difference and great doubt, and which, by a perverse tribunal, may be twisted in the most embarassing manner to injure our rights, whether as neutrals or as belligerents. I hope his Majesty's Ministers will refuse their adhesion to this part of The Hague treaty unless they can get, before it comes into force, some code of maritime law settled, which, from no selfish point of view, and no isolated point of view, but in view of our general interests as the greatest sea Power in the world, is absolutely necessary for our safety. I do not say that this international tribunal may not ultimately work extremely well, but a great deal has to be done before it does work well; and when I remember that The Hague Conference failed to deal with that which is the greatest of all the dangers now affecting neutrals in time of war—the danger of floating mines, which may affect thousands of innocent lives and hundreds of thousands of perfectly legitimate cargoes not one of which can be maintained to be contraband of war—when I remember that the Conference was impotent to settle this great issue, I confess I look with considerable alarm, or at all events with considerable doubt, to the issue of that conference of the great maritime Powers to which, in the language of official optimism, the Government allude in the course of this gracious Speech. There are some other points connected with external or Colonial affairs to which I should like to refer, but I do not wish to take up the time of the House. I will only say as regards South Africa and the question which has taken up so much public attention in connection with British Indians that I understand there is to be an Amendment moved, and we on this bench may, perhaps, reserve what we have to say upon that question until that Amendment is moved. I may just ask one question with regard to a matter which I brought before the House last year—the subject of the New Hebrides Convention with France on indentured labour. I do not on this occasion desire to deal with this at undue length. I made my points before; and I do not wish to rub them in unnecessarily. The House will remember the arrangements of the Convention respecting the labour of adults and young persons of both sexes involving repatriation at the end of the term of service. There remained, according to the Government, a great deal to be done by way of subsidiary regulation in connection with that Convention. Now I want to know what has been done by regulation? Has anything been done by regulation to mitigate the dangers which are incident to a system under which you compel young boys and girls, as well as adults, not with their own consent, but by the consent of the head of the tribe, to come in under a system of indentured labour? We know of the protests of our Australian colonies regarding the absence of some regulations, and the evil character of some other regulations. Have the Government done anything to get rid of these evils? If there are new regulations have they been carried out in concert with the French, or in opposition to the French? Are there any regulations to modify the admitted evils—I put it mildly—of the treaty, and if there have been new regulations are they regulations which apply both to the French and to the English, or only to the English employers of indentured labour? If they apply to both French and English well and good; if only to the British I would then point out to the Government that they have thereby destroyed one of the great advantages which they proposed to themselves by framing this extraordinary treaty; because one of those objects was that there should be a uniform set of regulations to prevent injurious competition, and, if there are two sets of regulations, you will have that very competition which the Government gave as one of the most serious evils of the practice in force before they took the matter in hand in the spirit of philanthropic consistency with the view of bringing up the employer of indentured labour in that part of the world to the high standard of civilisation which they have set before themselves and the country.

With regard to the proposed legislation for the session, the first observation I would make is that the list of measures which the Government have put before us is either not intended to be carried through in the course of the session, or, if intended to be carried through must be carried through under conditions which will make free debate in this House quite impossible. I remember the Prime Minister, or it may have been the Chancellor of the Exchequer, telling us last session how impossible it was for any Government, or for the permanent officials, to carry out their work, if the whole of the autumn was occupied by those controversies incidental to a Parliamentary autumn session. Is it possible to carry this programme through without an autumn session? Is it possible to carry it through with an autumn session unless you are going to continue a system which has grievously curtailed liberty of discussion. On this point I would make an appeal to Gentlemen who do not belong to the minority with whom I am connected. It is only this House which can safeguard its liberties. You can get no sympathy or support from outside these walls. You can, no doubt, evoke popular cheers for a Government which is credited with vigorous suppression of obstruction, and so you can by denouncing a Government for gross interference with debate, but the public do not understand our procedure, and it therefore rests with the House itself, and with the House only, to deal with these matters. The minority are helpless, of course; they, as is their duty, may express to the best of their ability the dangers of the situation, but they have no real power of exercising any control against a Government majority, nor do I for a moment expect or desire that a majority should show its Parliamentary power of showing disapproval by voting in the Lobby. It cannot be done in that way, I admit; but I do earnestly desire every man who has the future of the House at heart to urge the Government—who I do not believe in their hearts really require urging—to try to find some system which will enable the House to discuss and vote upon the main propositions in legislative proposals. We really have no such way now. Grand Committees may have many merits, but not that. It is only by a legal fiction that a Grand Committee is a microcosm of the House; it is not the House, and it cannot be made the House. I do really think when I look at the Government's programme, quite apart from my views upon it, that the Government, calling us together at the end of January, cannot hope to get through that programme without the use of violent methods, which they themselves, I am sure, deplore, and I feel moved to appeal to the House not to allow the process of Parliamentary decay to go further than it has already gone. I do not in the least wish to treat this as a party matter; it is in no sense a party matter. I speak to those who have not had the long experience in the House that I have had, but who have as great a desire at least that this House should remain a great free theatre for open discussion, where the minority shall have an equal chance with the majority of making itself heard, as it has been in the past. Of course, I am not going through the Bills; I will wait until I see those products of Governmental ingenuity before I say more upon them, but I must just say one word about the Irish University Bill, not because I wish to make any comments upon its substance, but because I think the procedure adopted by the Government is really extraordinary. It will be remembered that the present holder of the office of Chief Secretary for Ireland took up his task just before we met last year. At that time, Mr. Bryce, a Cabinet Minister, sketched for the public his idea of a new University for Ireland, and, not content with that, he told the world that that was the plan the Government would adhere to and which must be taken or left, as he put it. Well, Mr. Bryce having nailed his colours to the mast, the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary came into office and proceeded to haul down those colours.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.) indicated dissent.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, I am not quite right; he proceeded to get someone else to haul them down. The somebody else was the Provost of Trinity College. Is not that a very extraordinary proceeding? We first have the Government announcing a certain policy as irrevocable and unchangeable, and then we find them revoking and changing it, and, not content with this revolutionary procedure, and notwithstanding this, they abstain from announcing a change in their policy themselves; they put up somebody else——

MR. BIRRELL: No, certainly not.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Is that not so? I assure the right hon. Gentleman that the last thing I meant to do was to misinterpret the transaction. I thought that the Provost of Trinity College, speaking on behalf of the right hon. Gentleman——

MR. BIRRELL: No, no; nothing of the kind.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I entirely withdraw. I was completely misinformed as to what the Provost of Trinity College said, or else he was misinformed as to the mandate given by the right hon. Gentleman. I do not know which I should accept.

MR. BIRRELL: The Provost intimated to me that he was going to Manchester to make a speech, and I am bound to say that I rather gathered from his letter that he would not have been averse to have been allowed to state what he knew through private conversations as to what were my conceptions. He distinctly understood that he had no such authority for a statement unfolding the measure of the Government. I rather imagine that he put it entirely hypothetically, that if the measure proved to be of such a character he thought it should be accepted by Trinity College. I did not ask him to make any statement.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I advise the right hon. Gentleman to look at the speech made by the Provost of Trinity, and he will see whether or not the action taken by that learned friend of mine conformed with his instructions or the want of instructions, or was formed on the pattern I indicated to the House just now. But, at all events, I absolve the right hon. Gentleman of all complicity in this strange method of reading a Bill for the first time in public. If we turn now from the legislative proposals of the Government, on which I now say nothing more to the administration since we parted, I am obliged to make reference, and it shall not be a long one, to one or two points, and the first Minister upon whose administration I should like to say something is the right hon. Gentleman who presides over the Board of Education.

That right hon. Gentleman, I am quite sure, has the interests of education at heart, but I think his administration is really the most cynically partisan of any I have ever known. The first procedure to which I should like to call attention is the action of the Education Board in regard to the voluntary schools at Swansea. I do not think it is denied that the local authority in the first place refused to carry out their duty for the maintenance of those schools and by the payment of the salaries of teachers. The second point is that they had no legal title to refuse to make those payments, and the third point is that the Education Department knew that, and yet for several consecutive months, unless I am misinformed, the managers had to pay out of their private resources the salaries of teachers which ought to have been paid by the local authorities, which the Board of Education knew ought to have been paid by the local authorities and which they had power to make them pay. For three or four months or more the right hon. Gentleman sat quietly in his office allowing the law to be broken, because the victims were the managers of voluntary schools; and the whole procedure seems to show that he regarded it as an administrative duty to make the task of voluntary school managers as difficult as it could be made. Well, that is one question. Among others there is the notorious question of the £100,000 which the right hon. Gentleman, contrary to the accepted principle of the Treasury, contrary to the accepted doctrine laid down year after year by the Committee on Public Accounts, and contrary, as I believe, to law, got into the Appropriation Bill without any safeguard whatever. I am not going on the technical point but upon the substantial point, going back to the matter I raised just now in relation to the privileges of the House, and a principle which has ever been regarded as of the greatest importance, viz., that money shall be voted for specific purposes and applied to those purposes. I am not aware if any regulations have been laid down to prevent the right hon. Gentleman from spending the whole of the money in his own constituency or in any other constituency he might desire to favour; or to prevent him from distributing it among those with whom he might happen to agree theologically or politically, in this county or that county, this parish or that parish, at his own sweet will, without any principle of Parliament or control of the House, with an absolute freedom amounting to licence, and, as I say, repugnantly to the spirit and traditions governing the management of national finance. Then if I wanted a third point—it is one of which much will be heard during the session—I should find it in the extraordinary methods adopted for dealing with trusts in connection with training colleges. I am not going to argue now whether it is a good or a bad thing to give to those to whom is entrusted the education of youth in this country the chance, at all events, of receiving religious training in some training college in conformity with their own theological views. It is manifestly just and expedient, and, if necessary, I could quote the doctrine of the late head of the Education Office pointing in that direction. But I will not argue the merits of the question now; it will arise later in connection with education. But the right hon. Gentleman, having started his policy of starving out every training college which did not conform to his particular views with regard to religious teaching, was met by the legal difficulty involved in the trust deeds under which these colleges were built. What does the right hon. Gentleman do? He says, "Oh, it is quite true I am Minister for Education, and as Minister for Education I choose to lay down the principles on which this public money is to be given, and to penalize any college, whatever be the implications or the implied contracts under which it was built." If he is told that the trust deeds of the schools are inconsistent with his principles, he says, "Well, then, I am not only Minister of Education, but I have got judicial duties as the heir of the Charity Commission, which is itself the heir of the Court of Chancery, and in my quasi-judicial capacity I shall modify these trusts, not in accordance with law which the Court of Chancery or the Charity Commission has to administer, but according to my views, according to what I should like training colleges to be." It has hitherto been found possible in this country to give these judicial functions to the head of an office and to be confident that they would be administered judicially. After these proceedings of the right hon. Gentleman, who can have that confidence in the future? I think he has done much more than to commit the gravest injustice upon the training colleges. He has shaken confidence in a system which, on the whole, has worked well, and which—I daresay he has the best intentions—by his extraordinary and arbitrary violence he has twisted to his own political ends.

Well, the only other comments I have to make on the administration of the Government relate to law and order in Scotland and Ireland. Many of us have been rather surprised at the apparently very divergent and independent lines taken by different Ministers in the Government. Each appears to have had his own policy, which he has pursued with very little regard to the general policy of the whole Administration; but there is a happy conformity of ideas between the Scottish Secretary and the Irish Secretary with regard to certain questions of law and order. It is quite true the Scottish Secretary only deals with what he calls an elaborate experiment on a small scale in the Western Hebrides; but he has, in common with the Irish Secretary, succeeded in persuading the law-breakers in that part of the world that they have the sympathy of the Government behind them and that they are not doing anything very wrong, after all, in breaking the law and invading other people's property. The Chief Secretary, I admit, has made a full statement within the last few months as to the gravity of the outrages in connection with cattle-driving in Ireland; but he is also perfectly aware that some of the answers he gave in this House and authorised to be given in another place were of a kind which might produce in the evil-doers the idea that the Government favoured their proceedings, and which in fact did produce that idea. I think that is a most deplorable state of things. I am not now going into details with regard to the Government of Ireland or of the Western Hebrides, though I hope on that latter subject we shall be allowed to have the printed correspondence between Lady Gordon Cathcart and the Lord Advocate and the Secretary for Scotland, especially in connection with the Scottish legislation the Government have expressed their intention of re-introducing. As regards Ireland, we propose to make that the subject of an Amendment to the Address, and I do not think I need proceed further now; but even the Chief Secretary will admit that the condition of Ireland at present is, from his point of view, deplorable. He told us last year in an often-quoted phrase that "minorities must suffer." Minorities, no doubt, must suffer, but there is some suffering from which it is the business of a good Administration to save them. I do not think minorities should be made to suffer by having their cattle driven. I do not think that they should be made to suffer by being shot in the legs. They should not be made to suffer by being so boycotted that they can neither live nor be buried. The right hon. Gentleman knows well enough that his refusal to use the powers he has at his disposal to see that the law is obeyed has ended, as everybody acquainted with Ireland must have known it would end, in giving such a licence to the powers of disorder as has made in large parts of Ireland the threat of outrage sufficient and outrage itself unnecessary. I think that is a most serious state of things. The right hon. Gentleman almost seemed in a speech he recently delivered to be desirous of founding on the failure of the British Government to maintain law and order a case for the Resolution in favour of Home Rule which I understand is to be proposed in the course of the next few weeks. The right hon. Gentleman represented himself as a solitary and pathetic figure in Ireland, as the one representative of British good will in that country. I do not doubt the right hon. Gentleman's good will to Ireland, but I do not think he is more solitary than other people, or more pathetic.

Mr. BIRRELL: The expression I used was "isolated."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I beg pardon. The right hon. Gentleman is right. He said he was an isolated and solitary figure—not a pathetic figure. The right hon. Gentleman has got a task which everybody knows is a difficult task. It is a task which can only be accomplished by using all the means at his disposal. To accomplish it the right hon. Gentleman must set himself earnestly to work with no view to any ulterior arrangement of the British Constitution of which he may happen to be in favour. This idea that on the failure of the Government responsible to Parliament for the maintenance of order in Ireland you are going to found a case for Home Rule is utterly repulsive and repugnant to all that is best in the feelings of our countrymen. You may persuade them —I hope you never will—that the cause of justice requires separation; you may persuade them that by such a separation Irish prosperity and English and Scottish prosperity may be promoted, but you never will persuade them that merely because you are not strong enough to see that the minority is preserved from outrage, because you are not vigorous and courageous enough to see that the law of the land is carried out, and that it is the law of the land and not the law of the League that is feared and obeyed throughout Ireland—on that foundation you never will get the people of this country to acquiesce in the change you propose.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): Is there no crime in England?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not propose for the moment to discuss any further the question of crime in Ireland, because an opportunity will be given by our procedure to do so next week. It is sufficient now to indicate the gravity of the situation as I regard it, and to make this brief preface to a debate which is of vital importance, not in any interests of party, but as touching the bed-rock of civilisation in one of the most important parts of the United Kingdom.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): In the regretted absence of the Prime Minister, which, I am sure, will excite in all quarters of the House the sympathy which the right hon. Gentleman opposite expressed at the opening of his speech, it falls to my lot to say a few words—and they will be very few—in reply to the interrogatories and criticisms of the Leader of the Opposition. Before I touch on controversial matters let me associate myself and all who sit on this side of the House with the well-merited tribute which the right hon. Gentleman has paid to the manner in which my two hon. friends have discharged the responsible task assigned to them. They are both of them well equipped for the purpose—my hon. friend the Member for Leicestershire by that training in literary art which in days gone by has contributed so much to the gaiety of the nation, and which, I hope, he will continue to exercise in days to come; and my hon. friend the Member for Bristol, by long and close experience of commerce and municipal life. I am sure the House will agree with me that the general result of their efforts will certainly serve as a model for those who come after them. The right hon. Gentleman made one other personal allusion upon which I will venture to comment, although I have great difficulty in doing so. I mean the almost immeasurable loss which the country, and his friends in particular, have sustained by the removal of my very dear and distinguished friend Sir John Lawson Walton. I can speak with a great deal of intimate knowledge of his career to which few other persons are entitled to lay claim. He and I were born in the same year, called to the Bar in the same year, we for years went the same circuit, we took silk on the same day, and we were associated throughout both our professional and political lives by the closest sympathy and community of interest. I cannot adequately describe what a gap he leaves in the lives of those who had the privilege, as I so long had and to such an exceptional degree, of possessing his close friendship. I pass from these personal matters to deal first of all with the criticisms which the right hon. Gentleman has made, I am bound to say in a spirit of the greatest temperateness and moderation, of that part of the King's Speech which deals with our foreign relations. The right hon. Gentleman devoted some part of his speech to the Anglo-Russian Agreement, and he asked—and I think it was a perfectly fair question—that without the necessarily controversial machinery afforded by an Amendment to the Address some opportunity should be given for the discussion of the many points of interest which arise in connection with this Agreement. In the absence of my right hon. friend the Prime Minister I do not like at this moment to make an absolute and definite statement, but I will say that the request seems to me to be a perfectly reasonable one, and I hope an opportunity will be given—though I cannot give a strict pledge—and that at no distant date, for the discussion which the right hon. Gentleman invites. In the meantime let me deal very briefly with one or two criticisms he made. I am not disposed to scan the terms of the Agreement with that close and minute weighing of *quid pro quo* which would apply to a commercial bargain. The object of the Agreement was to remove a standing source of difficulty and danger to the peace of the world. If you once get the relations between ourselves and the great empire of Russia, so far as the continent of Asia is concerned, on a firm and friendly foundation, and arrive at a definite understanding, I cannot help thinking that many of the clouds which in days gone by have overshadowed the horizon, and sometimes brought us within measurable distance of conflict, will no longer appear. So important does it appear to the Government—without sacrificing any substantial or real British interest—to obtain a real definite agreement with Russia, that I personally should not feel we had in any way betrayed the interests of our country or been false to our stewardship if it were pointed out that in this or that particular quarter Russia had gained slightly more than we had. That, I think the right hon. Gentleman will agree with me, is the general spirit (Mr. BALFOUR: "Hear, hear!") in which a great international Agreement of this kind ought to be regarded. The specific points of the right hon. Gentleman resolve themselves into two. The first is his apprehension that by the division of Persia into what he describes as three zones, in two of which Russia and Great Britain respectively have what are called spheres of influence, there may be some risks to the future progress and development of British trade. I believe a close study of the agreement will show that we have taken ample safeguards for our commercial interests. Within the zone or sphere of influence which is to belong to the Russian Government all British concessions have been most carefully safeguarded. As regards the actual territorial delimitation of the sphere we have reserved for ourselves, no doubt it is mainly governed not so much by commercial as strategical considerations, but in the other not marked out as the special, exclusive, or dominant sphere of either of the two Great Powers we shall enjoy in common with Russia and the rest of the world absolutely equal privileges and opportunities. The right hon. Gentleman criticised the Agreement for not embodying special provisions safeguarding our interests in the Persian Gulf as they have been defined by successive Foreign Ministers—by no one with more clearness and precision than Lord Lansdowne in the time of the late Government. My answer is twofold. The Persian Gulf, notwithstanding its name, is not exclusively Persian, a considerable part of it is Turkish; so that other interests and Powers come into view when you deal with the Persian Gulf. In dealing with Persia, however, Russia and Great Britain are practically the only two Powers with substantial interests, and we should have been travelling outside the scope and ambit of our agreement with Russia with regard to Persia, if we had included in it the Persian Gulf. But, although our interests in the Gulf do not come within the scope of the agreement, in order to make it clear that it is not to be supposed that we have in any way abandoned the position taken up by our predecessors, a contemporaneous declaration was made by my right hon. friend the Foreign Secretary and by our Ambassador when the agreement was signed and assented to by M. Isvolsky, and it must be taken as part and parcel of the agreement come to. Although the Persian Gulf is not mentioned in the agreement, Russia has assented to the view we have hitherto taken, and shall continue to maintain, of our interests in the Gulf. As regards Tibet, that is a matter which could be more conveniently discussed when we come to deal with the Agreement specially as regards Tibet. We conceive we have embodied in a formal, definite, written shape the very assurance the right hon. Gentleman demands—which Lord Lansdowne in his communications with the Russian Ambassador considered to be adequate and appropriate to the case.

I pass to what the right hon. Gentleman said about The Hague Conference. I regret to observe a disposition—an exaggerated disposition, I think—in many quarters, to belittle the work that was done there. A very great English writer—Burke—said that the main end and object of the British Constitution was to bring twelve honest men into a jury-box—though some people may think that rather an exaggerated view to take of the value of that institution which has been called the palladium of our liberties. But it is a great thing to bring the representatives of all Powers, great and little, round a table from time to time to discuss various questions of international law and policy, and to try to make some advance by discussion, even though at the time actual agreement in regard to some matters cannot be arrived at. I agree there are defects in the constitution of the Conference, and obviously there are still greater defects in some of its methods of procedure; but, nevertheless, in the view of the Government the time spent by our representatives at The Hague Conference was not thrown away. Although the results may not equal the anticipations the more sanguine among us formed, yet even when you come to judge the Conference by solid results, serious and substantial advance has been made in the direction which we all hope the world will gradually take. Notwithstanding the efforts which were made, no agreement was come to in regard to a point to which the Government attach the greatest importance—the compulsory reference to arbitration of such matters as matters of international law relating to the interpretation of treaties, which are pre-eminently adapted for that treatment. The Convention for the establishment of a Prize Court is really a very solid and fruitful achievement. Let me point out with regard to the right hon. Gentleman's criticism that that particular Convention does not need to be ratified until June, 1909. The other Conventions must be ratified by June in the present year. The extra year was specially arranged for that Convention, because it was felt that this important preliminary question must first be determined before the Court can be called into useful being—What system of law is to be administered? As indicated in the gracious Speech from the Throne, the Government have arranged for a conference this year, at which we hope to arrive at something like a general agreement on the important general principles—the innumerable matters of subsidiary detail you can safely leave to a tribunal of this kind—of maritime and international law which in the altered conditions that now prevail ought to be generally accepted by civilised nations. In our view this is a condition precedent to the establishment and working of such a Court for any useful purpose. So much in regard to that, but then there are one or two other points which the right hon. Gentleman raised, referring to questions arising outside these islands. Let me say one word with regard to British Indians in the Transvaal, as to which I hear an Amendment is likely to be moved on the Address. I very much deprecate at this particular moment any discussion of that kind in this House. I do so for this reason. We have the best ground for hoping, as the result of negotiations now taking place between the different parties concerned, that an agreement will be come to between the Transvaal Government, on the one side, and the responsible representatives of the British-Indian community in the Transvaal on the other, by which the cause of grievance will be removed—by which, without the Transvaal sacrificing the policy upon which all the white races in that country are united, there will be removed what we have all felt in this country to be a serious source of disturbance and discontent among our Indian fellow-subjects. I am not in a position to say that these negotiations will necessarily be successful; but as long as there is a chance of such a result—and I believe there is a very good chance—I would appeal to the

House to abstain from discussion. As regards the New Hebrides, I think I can set at rest the disquiet of the right hon. Gentleman. Until the Convention which was the subject of so much acrimonious discussion last year, was made between France and ourselves, there were no arrangements of any sort with regard to the treatment of natives. The whole thing was a complete chaos, without form, law, or tribunals. Under the Convention England and France agree on certain general rules which were embodied in that instrument. We intimated in the course of our debates last year that we were not going to stop, and we have not stopped. Instructions have been issued—independent instructions—by each of the two Governments concerned to their respective Commissioners to guide those Commissioners in framing further regulations, the general spirit and object of which will be in accordance with the declarations so often made by my right hon. friend. These instructions shall be laid before the House without delay, I hope in the course of a very few days, so that the House may have an opportunity of scrutinising and, if need be, of criticising them, but the regulations themselves will not be framed until the Commissioners on the spot have had time to consider the best mode of carrying into effect the instructions.

And now, coming to our domestic concerns, the right hon. Gentleman attacked two branches—his survey of the situation did not encourage him to carry the war any further—and two branches only, of the administrative work of the Government. The first was that for which my right hon. friend the Minister for Education is responsible. Well, my right hon. friend will have an opportunity in the course of a day or two of replying in detail to the criticisms of the Leader of the Opposition, and I shall certainly leave him to deal with the question of Swansea, with regard to which the details I have are not sufficient to enable me to deal with it, but meantime there are two points raising questions of great constitutional importance, as to which I should like to say a word. The first is as to the vote of £100,000 last year. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to regard that as an innovation in constitutional practice, and he attacked it as in some way removing from the control of the House of Commons the expenditure of public money. No such charge can possibly be made. The intention with regard to that vote of £100,000 was clearly explained by my right hon. friend at the time, and it was sanctioned by the House when they sanctioned the Estimates. At any rate, no attempt was made to challenge it; and with reference to what the right hon. Gentleman has suggested that my right hon. friend might have spent the money as he pleased at his own will and pleasure within the limits of his own constituency alone, my right hon. friend has reminded me of the fact that Regulations were issued by him and his Department before the Appropriation Bill was introduced, in which the application of the money for certain specified purposes was laid down, and therefore there is no ground whatsoever for saying that the expenditure of the money was in any way withdrawn from the control of the House of Commons. And as regards the other part of the indictment—namely, the supposed arbitrary dealing by my right hon. friend with the trusts of the training colleges—is my right hon. friend the first person who has interfered with trusts? What about the Act of 1902? What about the Kenyon-Slaney clause? I remember very well, sitting then as we were on that side of the House, the right hon. Gentleman rising at this box and vindicating under the altered conditions of the time the right and even asserting the duty of Parliament to interfere with trusts which had become obsolete or inapplicable to present-day conditions. Therefore we are not the first to lay hands on the sacred ark. The right hon. Gentleman may say: "Oh! but that was done by Act of Parliament." I was speaking for the moment of the principle and not of the method, but if it is a sacrilegious thing to interfere with the intentions of the pious founder, the result is the same, whether it is committed by Act of Parliament or by a Minister of the Crown, acting as he must act—otherwise he could not keep his place for twenty-four hours—with the assent of the representatives of the people. But it is not true that the trusts were interfered with by my right hon. friend. What did my right hon. friend do? He proposed that in future that part of the taxation of the country which is appropriated for these colleges will be appropriated subject to certain conditions. If you do not choose to conform to those conditions, well and good; nobody will force you to do so; but the House of Commons can say we will not vote you the money. It was suggested the other day in the newspapers, and Aristotle was quoted to show, what a shocking state of things it was that the right hon. Gentleman should by administrative act set aside the settled statutory law of the land. There is no legislation of any sort or kind which deals with the conditions attaching to the subsidizing of the training colleges. It is a matter which has depended entirely, year by year for two generations upon the will and act of this House, and if my right hon. friend, the House assenting, says that in future a training college shall not receive a grant except upon certain terms, we are not interfering with the provisions of any Act of Parliament. If they wish to continue to receive public money, they can on their own initiative put into operation the machinery of the Charitable Trusts Act, and then their trusts can be made more elastic so as to enable them to avail themselves of the aid of public money. But that does not compare in arbitrariness with the overriding by means of an Act of Parliament, *in invitum*, of the trusts of a training college. So much for the attack on education.

Then the right hon. Gentleman carried the war into the Irish domain. I assume that we are going to have an Amendment on the question of Ireland, and therefore I shall leave this matter to my right hon. friend to deal with and touch upon it only very briefly. What is the charge against my right hon. friend the Chief Secretary? As far as I can make out, it is that he has deliberately neglected the enforcement of the law and the maintenance of order in Ireland in order to make out or to help out a case for Home Rule. Is that the charge? I do not hear a very ready assent. That is what I understood the right hon. Gentleman to suggest. If the allegation does not come to that I do not see what it comes to at all. He drew a picture of the terrible condition to which Ireland has been reduced under the *fainéant* administration of my right hon. friend. I entirely demur to that description. I think it is a caricature. That there are in certain parts of Ireland features which, from the point of view of social order, are disquieting I quite agree. I do not in any way minimise or palliate them, but the language which one reads in the Press, and to which the right hon. Gentleman very nearly approached in his speech, is wholly inappropriate to anything that has taken place in Ireland. We are asked, Why do you not put in force the Crimes Act? Why are you content with the resources of the ordinary law? I will tell the House the reason. We do not put in force the Crimes Act for reasons which are obvious to any one acquainted with the Parliamentary history of the last twenty years. For twenty years we have protested against the Crimes Act. We protested against it, not so much because of its actual provisions, but because, being a permanent Act placed on the Statute-book, it empowers the Executive, at its own discretion, at any time, in any circumstances, in violation of the best traditions of our Constitution, to use powers outside those of the ordinary law without coming to Parliament to make out a case. That was the head and front of the case we made in 1887 against that legislation when it was passed, and that protest we have continued to make against the continuance of that Act on the Statute-book. But I will put the matter to the test, and the test I put is this—would any Chief Secretary, with the facts and figures which are in the possession of my right hon. friend at this moment, have ventured to come down to the House and ask for the passing of the Crimes Act? I undertake to say that, while we have had many Coercion Acts, until the Act of 1887 they were all temporary measures passed for a limited time and at any rate pretending to be based upon some exceptional case of special emergency. I will venture to say that not for fifty years has any such Act been obtained from the House of Commons upon materials so flimsy as those which they attempted to produce. The truth is that with exceptions here and there, and apart from what is called cattle-driving, there is very little serious crime in Ireland. There have been certain cases, as to which, be it observed, no Crimes Act would be of the least use, for the simple reason that the difficulty is not in obtaining a conviction, but in obtaining the evidence, and without evidence not even a drum-head court-martial can convict. I repeat that with those exceptions apart from cattle-driving, there is very little serious crime in Ireland. I do not palliate, and none of my colleagues have ever palliated, cattle-driving. I think it is not only a criminal, but a stupid act, because, apart from all moral considerations, it seems to be calculated to strike a very serious blow at a flourishing and necessary Irish industry. How have the Government dealt with cattle-driving? First of all they have used all the resources that the ordinary law placed at their disposal. But we are not content with that. We believe—I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman will think it mere sentimentalism on our part—that when you see manifestations of this kind going on over a considerable part of Ireland, undoubtedly it will be your first duty to enforce the law, to protect property, to maintain order; but you cannot brush such manifestations aside as if they were mere meaningless, motiveless horseplay—a kind of spontaneous outburst of original sin on the part of the Irish people. We believe you must try to discover something in the social and economic conditions of which they are the deplorable outcome, or to, at any rate, seek to explain the popular sympathy and want of popular condemnation with which they are received. When we look at these conditions we find something which appears to us—I do not say for a moment to palliate, but to lead us to understand—the illegal conduct, something which seems to call for an instant and effective remedy. There can be no doubt that the untenanted land, of which we are now speaking—I am now speaking of the grazing lands in Galway and Roscommon—did come and was intended to come within the scope of the right hon. Gentleman's Land Purchase Act of 1903. This untenanted land could be purchased by the Estates Commissioners; it could be purchased by the Congested Districts Board. The process has been a slow one. The ardent hopes which were raised at the time when the Act was passed have been delayed or altogether disappointed; and in the opinion of the Government the time has come when this part of the Act should be strengthened by the application of compulsion in fit cases, and the untenanted land without injury or loss to anybody should be more freely available for the purpose of holdings. In the gracious Speech from the Throne there is an intimation of legislation for that purpose, and it will without undue delay be brought before the House. I do not deny for a moment that it is the first duty of the Executive to enforce the law, but second only to that, in our judgment, there exists the necessity of removing this legitimate grievance and of providing a better outlet for the hopes and the aspirations of the people of Ireland. Finally, as regards the observations I have to make on the right hon. Gentleman's speech, what is to be said of the charge as to the length of the programme? The right hon. Gentleman says that our measures are either intended not to be carried through in this session, or to be carried through without adequate discussion. With regard to that proposition, I need hardly say that I quite agree with him that it is a matter which interests all parties and all sections in the House that we should try by some common agreement to arrive at a better method of disposing of our time. The crude application of the guillotine year after year, by Government after Government, although it has become a Parliamentary necessity, is a necessity which, I believe, is nowhere regarded with more reluctance than among those who have reason to resort to its use. I hope that we may be able to come to something like a better agreement on the point. I am quite satisfied that, given a session of reasonable length, given a proper allocation of time—and by allocation I do not mean merely to fix the length of time to be given to particular stages, but the distributing of it in some proportion to the importance of the measures, and the necessity of considering each of their stages—I believe, given a proper allocation of time and some useful kind of devolution, not only in respect of non-controversial Bills, but also of the non-controversial parts of controversial measures which are sent upstairs—in the combined operation of these methods we may find ample opportunity to discuss what I agree to be the extensive programme foreshadowed in the Speech from the Throne. At any rate, we are going to make the attempt. While the Speech contains no surprises, it marks the progress we hope this year to make in redeeming our pledges and our assurances, and of translating the professions of the platforms and of the electoral contest into the pages and the chapters of the Statute-book of the realm. The right hon. Gentleman scoffs at our programme. It seems to him inflated beyond the legitimate dreams at any rate of Parliamentary ambition. I agree that, judged by the example which he himself set, it might be fairly described as open to the charge. But we believe that there is not an item in it which is not at the same time urgent and practicable. We appeal with confidence to the House of Commons, by efforts of sacrifice, zeal, patience, and resolute determination, to make this, as we hope and believe, a fruitful and beneficent session.

Mr. J. REDMOND (Waterford): After what has been said in this debate, no one will be surprised that I am anxious to seize the earliest opportunity of discussing for a brief period the Speech from the Throne, and the programme set forth in that Speech, from the Irish point of view. The programme is an enormous one, and I do not propose at all to discuss it; for although my colleagues and I are most anxious to give any assistance in our power to the democracy in this country in obtaining reform, following thereby the traditions which have come down to us from the Nationalist representatives of Ireland ever since the days of O'Connell, at the same time we feel, everyone of us, that our real business here, I had almost said our only business, is not to promote measures of reform for Great Britain, but to obtain measures of reform for Ireland. It is inevitable that, from the Irish point of view, this Speech from the Throne, as are all Speeches from the Throne, is disappointing and unsatisfactory. In this Speech there is no mention made whatever of the one great question which to our mind embraces all questions, all grievances in Ireland—I mean the question of Irish self-government. Some people may think that they are absolved from responsibility on that question by reason of the history of the Irish Council Bill of last year. I may remind hon. Members that the Council Bill was not proposed as a Home Rule measure; it was not proposed as a substitute for Home Rule, or an alternative to Home Rule; it was described to us as something of a quite different character, and whether it passed into law or whether it did not pass into law, in my humble judgment the responsibility remains the same upon all those public men who for the last twenty years have been publicly declaring their belief that the only solution of the Irish question is to be found in the concession of free and responsible government to the people of Ireland. I will not discuss the question of Ireland to-night at all, because as the House knows I have given a notice of Motion on the subject, and I hope it will be possible on that Motion to have a full and adequate discussion. I trust, too, that the result of the Motion will be that an overwhelming majority of Members of this House will declare themselves in favour of the principle of Home Rule for Ireland. I shall make only one further remark on this question, and I am induced to do so by some remarks of the Leader of the Opposition and by some remarks of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I confess I agree with the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition. I do not take the same sanguine view as the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer that it will be possible by arrangement so to apportion the time in accordance with the relative importance of the various Bills as to enable this House, in the course of one session, to deal with satisfactorily, to discuss satisfactorily, the whole of the measures —licensing, education, old age pensions and so on, I need not go through the whole of the list. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the

Opposition upon this point, I claim, is an unanswerable argument in favour of Home Rule. The only possibilities that I see in this matter are those apparently which he sees, either that there shall be inadequate discussion, the loss of freedom of debate, and thereby practically the destruction of the glory and the power of this assembly, or, on the other hand some arrangement whereby this House will be relieved from the anomaly, the absurdity of dealing, in one and the same assembly with the local affairs of the various portions of the Empire. That is the only argument I shall make about Home Rule at this stage. I say that if the whole of this coming session of Parliament were to be devoted to Irish affairs alone, every minute of it would be wisely expended in discussing Irish grievances with the view to redress them, and the same can be said of Scotland, of England, and of Wales, and until this House makes up its mind to deal with the congestion of business and the whole operation of the Parliamentary machine from that point of view, it is hopeless to expect by any series of new methods or any arrangements between parties—which is an impossibility—to make the machine work satisfactorily or well. The Speech from the Throne deals with two great Irish questions—after Home Rule, the two greatest of Irish questions—the education question and the question of land. I heartily congratulate the Government and the Chief Secretary on their determination to introduce a University Bill. I must say I regret that the Leader of the Opposition, especially remembering his own record on this question, did not address some more serious observations to the House on this question. What did he do? He taunted the Government with the fact that Mr. Bryce introduced a scheme and then went away, and that his successor changed that scheme. I think, however, he has some foundation for it. I myself have in Ireland made the same criticism on the action of the Government. But the same trend of criticism has been levelled at every Government for the past twenty or thirty years. The right hon. Gentleman declared when he went to Partick that he was in favour of a settlement of the question, if only three conditions would be accepted by the Catholics of Ireland. The Catholics of Ireland, lay and clerical, agreed to the three conditions. Then he threw the question on one side, and said it would not be dealt with until there was absolute unanimity in the three kingdoms. The Leader of the Opposition has over and over again in recent years made serious contributions to the discussion of this question and he has admitted its gravity.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Hear, hear.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I regret that to-night when there is a chance of this question coming before the House under conditions which may lead to a settlement, when the Chief Secretary has before him every indication of a likelihood of support from various quarters, the Leader of the Opposition has not afforded to him some encouragement instead of taking refuge in the somewhat paltry recriminations which have taken place between the various parties upon this question. I hope the words of the Leader of the Opposition do not mean that he is going to throw obstacles in the way of a settlement of the question now. I sincerely hope that the fact that he made no serious allusion to the question is not to be taken, more especially in view of his own record, as an indication that he is going to interpose obstacles, but on the contrary that he will give assistance and encouragement in the effort which the Chief Secretary is going to make. The people of Ireland listened with the greatest pleasure and respect not long ago to the Chief Secretary when he made a speech in which he stated that his whole political career and position were staked on the settlement of this question. That statement appealed to the people of Ireland as an honest declaration, and the Chief Secretary may be quite sure that they will smooth his path as much as possible, and that those who have predilections on this question will be inclined to put them on one side. On behalf of the laity of Ireland, and on behalf of the hierarchy also, I venture to say that they will give him every assistance if he will enshrine in his Bill the one principle of equality of treatment between Catholics and Protestants. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will introduce a satisfactory Bill. I would also urge him to introduce it at the earliest possible moment and not leave it over, because political life is very uncertain. [OPPOSITION cheers.] I was not thinking of the remote chance of the hon. Member for North Armagh coming into office in the near future when the Baileys of Ireland would be brought under his lash. I urge the right hon. Gentleman to introduce his Bill at once, and let us deal with this question. With regard to the promised Land Bill it is not easy to speak of it with any confidence, because unfortunately we have not seen the Report of Lord Dudley's Commission which has been for many years inquiring into this question. It is a great misfortune that that Report was not furnished a considerable time ago. I rejoice to see from the terms in which this matter is alluded to in the King's Speech that the intention of the Government is not merely to propose the acquisition of compulsory powers to deal with untenanted land in congested districts, but that they intend to deal with the problem of the ranches wherever congestion may be found throughout Ireland and not only in the West. I also rejoice to find that they do not propose to confine their Bill to that question at all, but to deal as well with the amendment of the Land Act of 1903 the necessity for which the experience of intervening years has made manifest to everyone who understands this question. Therefore this Land Bill must deal with the question of finance. The Government ought not to lose a single moment in getting hold of Lord Dudley's Report, or in framing their Bill and introducing it. It is no use blinking the fact that until some further legislation is passed the land war in Ireland in some of its most acute phases cannot be said to be at an end. The Leader of the Opposition managed in his references to the condition of Ireland to make the most sweeping charges with reference to the state of law and order and the state of crime in that country. I desire to say that in my opinion there is a deliberate conspiracy on foot in this country to injure Ireland and to make party capital against the Government in order to damage the prospect of Home Rule by representing Ireland as at this moment in a state of lawlessness, anarchy, outrage, and crime. I say that that accusation is false. I admit that in some districts there is unrest and disturbance, and I will deal with that question in a moment. Let me first deal with this question of crime and outrage as compared with other periods of excitement in the history of Ireland in the last thirty years. It may be said to-day that Ireland is absolutely crimeless. I am now speaking within the hearing of men on both sides of the House who remember the state of Ireland in 1880 and 1881, and some whose minds go back and remember the state of Ireland in previous years. I say that no man who knows these things will contradict me when I say that by comparison with other periods of agrarian excitement in Ireland, Ireland at this moment is absolutely crimeless, and I thank God for it. I regard that as one of the greatest results of the great movement set on foot by Charles Stewart Parnell, and I take credit to the National Party that they now can conduct great and powerful political and agrarian movements and at the same time repress crime, because the people have learned the lesson that crime and outrage tend to injure their cause rather than further it. Let me make another comparison. I say that judged by the official criminal statistics Ireland to-day is far freer from crime of all sorts than England, Scotland, or Wales. Take all forms of crime—of course, I mean in proportion to the population—take for instance murder, attempted murder, violence to the person, malicious injury to property, riots, injury to Catholics and intimidation—in fact you may go through the whole list in the Blue-book—and I defy contradiction of my statement that according to those figures crime in Ireland has been and is to-day at a far lower ebb than in either England or Scotland. We may be told that, although it is true Ireland is freer from serious crimes than this country, there is a class of crime in Ireland which you have not got in this country, whose motive is agrarian and political. But are we to go into the question of the motives of crimes and offences? I remember being read a very serious lecture because I ventured to discuss the motive of an offence; I was told that it was improper and that no motive could be held to palliate a crime; but if we are to go into these motives, I ask if the agrarian or political motive is a worse or a baser motive than that which animates the ordinary criminal in his ordinary brutal offences! It may be said that these offences are preventible, and I admit it, but how? Are they preventible by repression? No; the whole history of your connection shows, the last thirty years especially, that John Bright was right when he said "force is no remedy," and that the only way to prevent these offences and crimes was to remove the cause and remove the grievance. You cannot get away from this fact, and all this loose talk by the Leader of the Opposition about anarchy and crime is of no avail whatever. You cannot get away from the fact that the amount of all sorts of crimes great and small is less in Ireland at this moment than it is in England or Wales. I have referred to conspiracy, and how does it work? I have recently been carefully watching it. Special correspondents have been sent over by some of the greatest papers in this country, and they have travelled all over Ireland, writing two or three long letters a week to their newspapers, all dealing with the state of anarchy and crime. They go down into a district which is admittedly in a state of unrest or disturbance, and they find some one offence has been committed there. They immediately write columns with great headlines about anarchy and crime. The illustrated papers take the matter up, and we have, as I exposed last session, faked photographs, by so-called respectable newspapers in this country depicting outrages in the very act of being perpetrated. In one case there was a picture of moonlighters with guns in their hands assaulting some women. When challenged about it this newspaper admitted that was not an actual photograph of such an occurrence, but that the moonlighters who had made an attack upon some house had obligingly assembled afterwards to have their photographs taken and sent for publication to a so-called respectable weekly illustrated paper. Individual cases of crime and outrage, of course, there have been. I am not denying there is crime and outrage to be found in parts of Ireland—my point is that there is less proportionately than there is in this country, and if that be so it is an outrage and a crime to try and depict Ireland as seething with crime. There have been more cases of mutilation of dumb animals in the last twelve months in England than there were in Ireland. Recently, as the House remembers, there were some horrible cases here and there—cases of horses, cattle, and so forth mutilated and killed in England. What would have been said if, say, France had sent over newspaper correspondents to inquire into the state of things in England and having got hold of these isolated cases of maiming cattle they had flooded the papers all over France with sensational articles describing these offences, dressed up with all sorts of sensational details and under headings "The State of Crime and Outrage in England"? Why, you would have said that it was a dastardly and cowardly attempt to blacken the character of this country. Talk of intimidation! What would you have said if, in connection with a recent murder case in London, when a man of the name of Wood was under trial, and the witnesses who gave evidence had to escape for their lives, the streets were blocked day after day with thousands of people and scores of policemen who were endeavouring to get the witnesses away—the witnesses had to be smuggled out at a back door, and even then some of them did not escape violence—what would you have thought if the French papers had described that as a type of the kind of freedom there was in this country, and if they had published all over the country articles headed "Gross and Criminal Intimidation in England"? Again, I say, you would have said that they were engaged in a dastardly and criminal conspiracy to blacken the good name of this country. That is exactly what is being done in Ireland. I say it is being done from the basest of motives. It is being done for the purpose of bolstering up a political party, simply for the purpose of making political capital against the present Government, simply for the purpose of endeavouring to hinder the Home Rule cause in future. It is said—it was said to-night by the Leader of the Opposition—that you have got cattle-driving in Ireland. There has been a great deal of most untruthful and ridiculous talk about this cattle-driving. People seem to think that it is a new and horrible invention. Well, it is as old as the hills. Anybody who is acquainted with the history of the movement in Canada before Lord Durham issued his famous Report will admit that it was a common practice in Canada for the so-called Nationalists to drive away the cattle of those opposed to them. For instance, John Wesley in his Journal said—

> "The gentry are continually driving away hundreds, yea, thousands, by throwing such quantities of arable land into pasture what leaves them neither business nor food. Thus it is that men depopulate many parts of Ireland."

And Archbishop Boulter said—

> "Many persons have hired large tracts of land of 2,000, 3,000, and 4,000 acres, and have stocked them with cattle, and have no other inhabitants on their land than so many cottiers as are necessary to look after their sheep and black cattle, so that in some of the finest counties in many places there is neither home nor cornfield to be seen in ten or fifteen miles travelling."

And Swift says—

> "These cruel landlords are every day unpeopling the kingdom by forbidding their miserable tenants to till the earth, against common reason and justice, and contrary to the practice and prudence of other nations, by which numberless families have been forced to leave the kingdom."

But I do not want to go back to ancient history. The real cause of cattle-driving is to be read in what took place immediately before the famine. That fell visitation which resulted in the destruction of hundreds of thousands of lives from hunger and disease was followed by a compulsory system of clearances, not for non-payment of rent, but for the express purpose of driving all human beings off the land in order to turn them into cattle runs and sheep walks. In the thirty years from 1849 to 1882, according to Mulhall's Dictionary of Statistics, 452,000 families were driven out of the land, that is to say a couple of millions of human beings. I do not know whether I would be justified in reading a few lines to the House from the famous declaration of an Irish Bishop of what he saw with his own eyes of clearances. He was Bishop of Meath, and Meath is one of the counties that is worst off in regard to the scarcity of population. The most Rev. Dr. Nulty says—

> "In the very first year of our ministry as a missionary priest in the diocese we were an eye-witness of a cruel and inhuman eviction which still makes our heart bleed as often as we allow ourselves to think of it. Seven hundred human beings were driven from their homes in one day, and sent adrift on the world, to gratify the caprice of one man, who before God and man probably deserved less consideration than the least of them. And we remember well that there was not a single shilling of rent due on the estate at the time except by one man, and the character and acts of that man made it perfectly clear that the agent and himself quite understood each other. The Crowbar Brigade employed on this occasion to extinguish the hearths and demolish the homes of honest and industrious people worked away with a will at their awful calling until evening. At length an incident occurred which varied the monotony. They had just learned that typhus fever had two in its grasp. The people supplicated the agent to spare those homes a little longer, but the agent was inexorable, and insisted that the houses should come down. The ingenuity with which he extricated himself from the difficulty of the situation was characteristic alike of the heartlessness of the man and of the cruel necessities of the work on which he was engaged. He ordered a large winnowing sheet to be placed over the beds on which the fever victims lay—fortunately they happened to be perfectly delirious at the time—and then directed the houses to be unroofed cautiously and slowly, because, he said, he very much disliked the bother and discomfort of a coroner's inquest! The appearance of men, women and children as they emerged from the ruins of their former homes, saturated with rain, blackened and besmeared with soot, shivering in every member from cold and misery, presented positively the most appalling spectacle I ever looked at. The landed proprietors in a circle round and for many miles in every direction warned their tenantry with threats of the direst vengeance against the humanity of extending to any of them the hospitality of a single night's shelter. The evictions which I have just described, and of which I was an eye-witness, must not be considered an isolated, exceptional event which could occur only in a remote locality where public opinion could not reach and expose it. Every county barony, Poor Law union, and, indeed, every parish in the diocese, is perfectly familiar with evictions that are oftentimes surrounded by circumstances and distinguished by traits of darker and more disgusting atrocity."

And while this deliberated policy was going on, how did the London *Times* speak—

> "If this goes on as it is continuing to go on Ireland will become very English and the

> United States very Irish. When an English agriculturist takes a farm in Galway or Kerry he will take English labourers with him. The Celt goes, to yield to the Saxon. This island of 160 harbours, with its fertile soil, with noble rivers and beautiful lakes, with fertile mines and riches of every kind, is being cleared quietly for the interests and the luxury of humanity."

Why do I trouble the House by going back upon these things? Because I say that you cannot understand the cattle-driving until you understand the circumstances from which it sprang, unless you understand the history of these great ranches. What has been the result of these great clearances? According to the agricultural statistics in Ireland, Ireland has the largest amount of cattle and the smallest number of human beings per hundred acres of almost any other country in Europe. Every decade from 1841 to 1891 the population has decreased and the number of cattle increased. Since 1800 up to this moment, that has been going on. Since 1860 well over three-quarters of a million of acres has been added to the grass land. From 1900 to 1901 there has been a decrease of crops of 30,608 acres, there was an increase in waste lands of 17,425 acres, and in pasture of 16,793 acres; and allow me to read a short description given the other day by an official of the Government of his experience in the county of Meath—

> "A visitor to County Meath coming from Dublin by either of the railways is at once struck by the great stretches of grass land, the straggling houses here, and the apparent want of life: true, we have plenty of animal life, but the proportion of human life is small as compared with the former. There is no village seen till we go to the very outskirts of the county bordering on Kildare, Westmeath, Cavan, and Louth; the rest of the country is given up to grazing, except small patches here and there. This state of things did not always exist, as seen by the small narrow ridges now covered over by a thick grass. Now, however, owing to many causes the land lies in grass and is entirely given over to the grazing of cattle. This is what a visitor would see coming from Dublin to Navan, and proceeding to Kells and Nobber the same kind of landscape is seen, but outside of these two places, if we travel further, a different class of land is met with—poorer land—land better adapted for tilling than grazing. Owing to the length of time the country has lain in grass tillage operations are almost forgotten. Few of the younger generation are able to follow the plough; old men only seem capable of this and they have their methods in keeping with themselves."

What became of the people driven off these ranches? Large numbers of them migrated; large numbers of them no doubt died in great misery in the great cities of England or on their way to America—well, of those that remained, what became of them? They went out on the bogs and barren hillsides and got little patches of land and there they endeavoured to keep body and soul together, but they were unsuccessful. They have not been able to live on these patches. If they had had them for nothing they could not have lived upon them. They have only been able to live by coming over here for harvest labour. That is not denied. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover will not deny it. In his speeches in 1903 he admitted it, and he further admitted over and over again that the Bill of 1903, could not be a real and complete success unless the questions of untenanted land and congestion were successfully dealt with. Before the very eyes of these people living in this huddled and wretched condition there are thousands of acres of pasture studded over by the ruins of cottages and villages from which they and their forefathers have been driven. We asked, when the Act of 1903 was going through, for compulsory powers to deal with this question. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover was more sanguine than we were. He believed it would be possible to carry out the intentions of the Act without compulsory powers. The Act was passed in that form, and now we know that in that respect the Act has failed and that unless compulsory powers are granted this land question will not be settled. It is nonsense to pretend that, unless this question is settled, you can have in those parts of the country peace, restfulness, and quietness. These cattle-drives have been, and are, entirely without crime so far as I know; and God knows it would have been known if the contrary had been the case. Not a single beast has been injured; not a single man has been wounded or attacked in connection with these cattle-drives. I say, therefore, that we will have to consider the causes of this unrest and the circumstances out of which it springs; and the fact that these demonstrations have gone on without outrage or bloodshed of any sort. And you will agree with me when I say that while I would be glad at all times to preach patience, it is no wonder patience has been exhausted when they have had to wait five years for the result of the promises of the right hon. Member for Dover, and after months have waited in vain for the report of the Commission to which they have been looking for a settlement of the question in the direction I have mentioned. The Chancellor of the Exchequer gave utterance to a most extraordinary fallacy. The right hon. Gentleman says—

> "This is an attack on a prosperous industry."

Does he mean to say that Ireland is richer and better off with plenty of bullocks than if the land were tilled? Why, it is not arguable! Let me read what Sir Horace Plunkett says in a leaflet issued by his own party. This leaflet deplores the increase of area of second-class pasture, and I think I am right in saying that most of these ranches are second-class pasture which would yield four times the wealth if tilled; he deplores the complacent satisfaction with which the present system is regarded; and he goes on to say that the breaking up of this land would most certainly increase the national wealth, supply wages of labour, and check emigration. Further, the writer goes on to declare that this second-class land should be utilised under a system of mixed farming. Now, I have gone at some length into this question of outrages in Ireland and of cattle-driving, because, as we have had a foretaste from the Leader of the Opposition on this question, I thought it as well to give the House a foretaste from us of the debate which is coming on. There is only one remedy possible for the state of things in Ireland, and that is to remove the grievances from which the state of things arises. Parts of Ireland, I admit, are restless and disturbed; indeed, I may say with some truth that all Ireland is angry and disappointed by the accusation that there is in Ireland a general state of outrage and serious crime. That is a cruel and false accusation. The Chief Secretary has been denounced in this country most freely because he refused to put the Crimes Act in force against cattle-drivers. Well, I congratulate him most heartily on having the courage to withstand that clamour. Most undoubtedly if he had yielded to it he would have courted disaster; and no man can say what the state of Ireland would have been in the near future if he had been foolish enough to go back on his own declarations and the pledges of the Government, and put in force against the people of Ireland the provisions of an Act which is a disgrace to the Statute-book and would not be tolerated for twenty-four hours if attempted to be put in force in this country. I say, Let the Government go on boldly with their policy. Let them introduce their University Bill immediately. Let it be a Bill on the principles of equality. Let the Chief Secretary use his influence with the Dudley Commission to produce their Report without delay. Let him frame his Land Bill and then introduce it immediately into Parliament. I would go further and say, Let the Government no longer shrink from putting their Home Rule convictions fully and frankly before the electors of this country. In this way only, I believe, can disaster in the immediate future in Ireland be avoided; and in this way only can they advance the cause of good order and government to which, I believe, they are sincerely attached.

MR. ARTHUR HENDERSON (Durham, Barnard Castle): I have to offer a few observations on the gracious Speech from the Throne from the standpoint that appeals so forcibly to those with whom I am associated on these benches. But before proceeding to my immediate point I should just like to notice two general paragraphs in the first part of the Address, and say in behalf of those with whom I am associated that we welcome most heartily the references to the policy of the Government in regard to Macedonia and the Congo Free State. No section of the House can be anything like satisfied with the condition of affairs that has existed in those parts of the world far too long, and every section of the House will be gratified if the policy of the Government assists towards a more humane administration of the law in these countries and secures a more happy condition of things there than exists at present. References have been made as to the length of the Government programme for home legislation. I do not think that anyone sitting on these benches can for a single moment profess to associate himself with the criticism of the Leader of the Opposition on that point. We are in no way alarmed by the Government's bringing before us on this occasion such a large and comprehensive list of measures. What we are more concerned about is this: Does the Government intend to place these promised measures on the Statute Book during the current session? Those of us who, long before we came into this House, took an interest in politics and specially in social and industrial questions, have learned that all previous Governments, like the present Government, have had the unfortunate knack of placing before Parliament at the opening of the session a large number of measures, and at the close of the session we have had to deplore the fact that there was nothing but promises so far as many of the measures were concerned. The Leader of the Opposition, when dealing with this point, was very much concerned about the traditions of this House. I think all sections of the House are concerned about its traditions, but some of us are more concerned about making the House a machine which will do effective work in turning out legislation which will meet the needs of the nation. There is something more important than safe-guarding the traditions of this House; regard must be had to the backward condition of social and industrial legislation, and we must be prepared to concentrate our best energies in adapting the legislative machine to meet the public wants. As to the programme which has been criticised, the first thing I notice with satisfaction is the declaration of the Government that they intend to make some provision for old-age pensions. We welcome most heartily that declaration, for we are convinced that the crying needs of the aged poor have been far too long neglected by both Parties in Parliament. I have more than once thought that the gentlemen for whom the Leader of the Opposition spoke would almost require to be commiserated with when we know how long they dangled this question before the great working-class population of the country. I remember the prominent position in which they placed this question in their social programme in 1894, and I think they are to be commiserated with that during the ten years they afterwards held office they never redeemed their promises, and now the opportunity will have gone for ever. Do the present Government intend to give us a scheme of old-age pensions adequate to the needs of the people of the country? I must say that we have had declarations from the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer in regard to the subject. I remember myself being one of a deputation which waited upon these right hon. Gentlemen during last session, and the assurances we obtained on that occasion were of a most definite and encouraging character, but during the last week or two some of us who are deeply interested in this question have been rather alarmed by a speech delivered by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It may be that we have misinterpreted that speech; but in doing that we were not alone in the political world. I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether we have been correct in interpreting his speech as conveying the suggestion that the poor are going to have heavier burdens imposed upon them, because of the scheme of old-age pensions coming into operation? If that is the intention of the Government then so far as I can speak for those on these Benches, I must say, and say with all the force I am capable of, that any such proposal will be resisted with all the power we possess. We feel that the burdens of the poor are sufficiently heavy, especially when we read about the wages of great masses of the people of this country. We saw a return only two or three days ago which showed that over 100,000 workmen on our railways receive less than £1 a week, and the Wiltshire agricultural labourer in many instances I believe—I am quoting from an agricultural return—receives 11s. a week. When we remember how from their £1 a week or 11s. a week they have to contribute so much to the taxation of this country, by the process of taxes indirectly levied, I say that, representing as we do so immediately the wage earning classes of the population, we are bound to resist, with all the facilities the forms of this House will permit, any attempt to increase the burdens of the poor, and to add to their economic embarrassment. I should like to know before leaving this subject if the Government are prepared to stand by the very definite declaration made by the Prime Minister on November 20, 1906, when he said that—

> "He agreed that the only satisfactory method of dealing with the question was by a universal plan by which a pension should be paid to anyone who applied for it, with of course certain well understood exceptions."

The right hon. Gentleman also said—

> "He was against contributory schemes——"

MR. ASQUITH: Hear, hear!

MR. ARTHUR HENDERSON: I am delighted to hear the Chancellor of the Exchequer say "Hear, hear!" I expected it because I was present at the deputation, and heard him endorse the statement of the Prime Minister, and his cheer now is an indication that some of us have misread his speech of the other day. To return, the Prime Minister said—

> "He was against contributory schemes because they involved inquisitorial machinery altogether inconsistent with the best traditions of the country and the thoughts of the people. Far from a pension sapping independence or undermining thrift it would do the opposite. It would give a sense of security and strength to men and women through life to know that, at all events, some provision was assured against the day of feebleness. Therefore any scheme must be universal in its application and it must be done by the State which alone had the money. He assured the deputation that the matter would be dealt with as soon as time and money permitted."

We trust, therefore, that the scheme of the Government will be in the strictest harmony with the statement made by the Prime Minister, and that the Government will devise an acceptable system. We also welcome the intimation on the part of the Government that they propose to deal with the question of the miners eight hours day. The Party with which I am associated, along with the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, feel very strongly on this question. We remember that a promise was given to us a year ago, and a Bill was introduced, but not proceeded with. We trust that this year it is the definite intention of the Government, not only to introduce that Bill, but to pass it into law. The other measures, very much of a social character, such as licensing and housing, town planning, and the endeavour to give some education to the children of this country, all have our most hearty approval, and I can assure the right hon. Gentleman we shall be prepared to give the fullest possible assistance to the Government by staying, not only during the greater part of the year—because reference has been made to the possibility of an autumn session—but by staying here for as many hours per day as they care to work the House, because we feel that for far too long these important measures have been delayed. I am not going to make any further reference to what the gracious Speech contains, but I want to make allusion to one or two points which it does not include. I should like to ask in all seriousness how it comes that there is no reference to the question of extending the Provision of Meals Act to Scotland, especially having regard to the very definite pledge which the Prime Minister gave on the closing day of the session of 1906. It will be remembered that on that occasion we had before us the Reports of the Amendment to the Bill in another place. They had struck out Scotland by a vote of twenty-eight to nineteen. We were given a promise that something should be done. I pressed that something should be done last session, and I was told that an effort would be made to deal with the question in the Scottish Education Bill. Last session, also, we introduced our own measure. What did we find? It went upstairs to a Committee, and I think I am right in saying that the Member for Leicester, who was in charge of the measure, got the most definite assurance from the Secretary for Scotland that our Bill would be included in the Scottish Education Bill. We remember the result of the introduction of the Scottish Education Bill. It was not persisted in, and although we had the definite promise of 1906 and the subsequent promise of the Secretary for Scotland in 1907, now at the beginning of the session of 1908 there is not a single word as to the intention of the Government so far as that question is concerned. I do hope that the Government will have some satisfactory explanation to offer. It may be that they propose to introduce some Bill that is not mentioned in the King's Speech.

MR. ASQUITH: A great many.

MR. ARTHUR HENDERSON: I am delighted to learn that that is the case, and I hope that the Bill to apply the Provision of Meals Act to Scotland will be among the number, and therefore I need not dwell further on that question. I also regret that in the reference to the work of the session there is no Bill for establishing wages boards in connection with sweated industries. That is a measure that I believe public opinion is thoroughly ripe upon. I believe that the serious evils arising from underpaid work throughout the country and the serious condition of the sweated worker, which have been brought out so prominently in connection with the various exhibitions that have been held, have aroused a strong desire and feeling that something should be done to assist in providing such a machinery as will tend to mitigate the evils of sweating. I hope I can interpret the position to be the same as that in connection with the feeding of children, and that this will also be one of the many measures that are not enumerated in the King's Speech, but will be introduced. I am aware that there is a Committee sitting on this important subject, and I see no reason, in view of the fact that the representative of the Home Office has now returned and can be placed in the witness box at the commencement of our work, why this question could not be handled, as was the Provision of Meals Bill two sessions ago, before the present session closes. There is one more point that it is absolutely essential that I should mention. I refer to the great question of unemployment. I admit that the two subjects of which I have spoken, the feeding of children and sweating, are of very great importance, but I do not think there is any part of the social question to-day that is so grave, so menacing, as the condition of thousands in this country arising from unemployment, which every day becomes more menacing. I learn from the last issue of the *Board of Trade Gazette* that there exists 272 unions having an unemployed membership of 6·1 per cent., compared with 4·9 per cent. in 1906. Now, if we work this out, we come to this result, that approximately there must be in this country to-day something like 500,000 people who are compulsorily unemployed. In the engineering trade alone we find that there is unemployment to the extent of 6·4 per cent. in 1907, whereas in 1906 it was 4·1 per cent.; in shipbuilding it is, in 1907, no less than 14·2 per cent. as compared with 11·3 in 1906. These figures connected with the unemployed almost startle us, but there has been a tremendous increase within the last few months in pauper statistics. From *The Times* newspaper published a few days ago I learn that in London the total number of paupers is 129,590, an increase of 5,612 over 1906 and 1,143 over the previous week of this year. At Woolwich, we find that there is an increase of 888; Bermondsey, 844; and Poplar, 1,074. These figures, I think, very clearly prove that there is a very menacing condition of things existing among our wage-earning population to-day, and when we remember that the Government incited hopes of giving a genuine unemployed measure two years ago, and severely condemned the existing Unemployed Workmen Act, we think they ought to deal with this subject. I have with me a quotation from one right hon. Gentleman who occupies a seat on the Government Bench—I mean the Postmaster-General. He said on 6th October, 1905, at Millwall—

> "The prolonged depression in trade necessarily brought want of employment. From the beginning he had endeavoured to treat this question on non-party lines. Mr. Long's Bill would have gone some way to deal adequately with this urgent and difficult question, but, as usual, the Government had not the pluck to stick to their guns, and at once retreated on the outcry of their supporters, and

> so mutilated the Bill as to make it unworkable and of little use. They had raised legitimate hopes in the minds of the genuine unemployed and then cruelly dashed them to the ground."

That is exactly what the present Government has done. In the King's Speech of the first session of this Parliament the Government declared their intention of introducing a Bill for amending this defective Unemployed Workmen Act, but this is now the third session, and it has not been passed. Last session there was no mention of it, and neither is there this session, although the Government know that the present Act has almost broken down. As the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade has said of it, it is a machine without motive power; a motor without petrol or petrol that has to be picked up by the way. Knowing this, we think the Government have encouraged hopes and cruelly dashed them to the ground. We have so far as our constituents are concerned —I mean by "our constituents" the million workers represented at our Conference last week—received very definite instructions. Our instructions are that everything possible must be done to have this, the greatest of all social questions, dealt with during this present session. We do not agree that this question shall be delayed until we have a revision of the tariffs. We believe that the demand is too great; that the danger is too imminent. We believe if you allow your population of unemployed to increase—and at the present time, as I have said, it is somewhere near 500,000—you will have an almost uncontrollable army of unemployed, than which the country cannot be exposed to a greater danger. Therefore, I sincerely trust that we shall have some assurance from the Government that if they cannot themselves introduce a Bill to deal with this question they will take hold of the Bill introduced by the hon. Member for Leicester last year, which is shortly, I hope, with the help of the ballot, to be re-introduced this session, and use that as a basis, moulding it more to their own liking, for providing machinery which shall be effectively used in the case of unemployment. My last word is with respect to the inspection of our mines and factories. I regret very much that the Government has not seen its way to institute an inquiry into the system of the inspection so far as mines and factories are concerned. My hon. friend the Member for Leicester has in two successive sessions upon the Home Office Vote raised this important question. We find the number of accidents owing to industrial pressure is on the increase, and, therefore, although we have a Compensation Act passed, we do not feel that that in itself is sufficient. We believe that prevention is better than cure. As my hon. friend the Member for Woolwich has often said, it is not after all much satisfaction to a man to receive compensation when his wife is a widow. We want prevention, and we believe that if we had a more perfect system of inspection in our factories some of these accidents could be prevented. If we can prevent loss of life, if we can prevent men and women being maimed in such accidents, that ought to be one of the first things to which the Government should give its attention. I should therefore like to suggest to the Government whether they cannot, during the present session, institute an inquiry into the whole question of inspection. If the Government will deal firmly and boldly with the legislative programme which they have outlined, they will find those for whom I speak ever ready to sacrifice their time and to assist them in making their measures effective for their purposes.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) said there were many points in the speech of the hon. Member for Barnard Castle with which he most cordially agreed, but he regretted that the hon. Member did not refer to some other paragraphs of the Speech from the Throne. He had been in Parliament many years, and he had heard many Speeches from the Throne, but he did not think he had ever heard before a Speech from which the commercial interests of the country had been entirely omitted. There were eight paragraphs in the Speech, yet there was not one which dealt with the commercial condition of the country, the case of employment or the state of the labour market, and certainly not one relating to the point upon which the hon. Member for the Barnard Castle division had spoken so eloquently. He desired to emphasise and enlarge upon the facts and figures which the hon. Member had quoted, and his authority for so doing was the publication issued by the Board of Trade. The statistics of the *Labour Gazette* referred to only a comparatively small handful of the trade unions of the country of the higher class, dealing with only some 640,000 workers. Yet out of that small number there were no less than 6·1 per cent. unemployed. But if that was the condition of things among these higher trade unions, how much more serious was the condition among those trade unions none of which made returns to the Board of Trade and among whose members the percentage of unemployment was double, treble, or even quadruple—in the unskilled trades of the country! Employment was slack or declining in the engineering, textile, shipbuilding, wood-working, tailoring, hatting, pottery and leather trades. A great deal had been made of the labour bureau, but what had been the result of it? How many applicants had succeeded in obtaining employment through it? For 3,700 situations there were 13,564 applicants, and many of the situations obtained were just casual labour for a day or two. In every one of the thirty-five districts referred to there was an increase of pauperism. In a single day in the middle of December, 1907, there were no less than 395,497 people being supported out of the rates. In round numbers, 400,000 were being supported out of the poor rates, and every one who represented working men—and they all represented a large number—every one who was familiar with the working class population knew how reluctant they were to bring themselves under the Poor Law, and how great must be the sufferings which they endured before they were content to be ranked as paupers. If we had nearly 400,000 being kept out of the poor rates, that was in itself a serious matter; but the state of affairs in the country which made such a condition of things possible was still more serious, especially when with this increase of pauperism there was at the same time an increase in the price of commodities and more especially of the prime necessaries of life consumed by the working classes. He had no desire to introduce into the discussion anything that would give rise to a difference of opinion upon this matter, but he wished to bring to the notice of the Chancellor of the Exchequer the official facts. In every one of the twenty-eight largest towns of Great Britain, except Huddersfield, the price of bread had increased during the past year. In Manchester, Middlesbrough, and Aberdeen it had increased by 1½d. and in the other towns by 1d. per quartern loaf. In Edinburgh, Glasgow, Belfast, Leeds and Manchester it was 6d. per loaf; in London and Liverpool, 5½d.—an increase of from 20 to 30 per cent. as compared with 1902, when out of the registration duty the Exchequer was receiving £7,000 a day to add to the revenue. This was the fact not only with regard to bread but also in the case of other prime necessaries. What steps had the Chancellor of the Exchequer taken to deal with this situation? The right hon. Gentleman had done nothing. He had omitted all reference to this condition of affairs in the King's Speech and proposed no measure to deal with it. He allowed it to go on although he admitted the evil. As the *Labour Gazette* said, the price of coal had increased last year at the rate of 16·8 per cent. That was, perhaps, very beneficial to the coalowners, who were largely represented in that House, but in a severe winter the increased cost of coal pressed heavily upon the poorer classes of the community. Not only had the price of coal, a great factor in the industrial life of the country, gone up for the bulk, but it had gone up relatively higher for small quantities, perhaps a cwt. at a time, purchased by poor people. An increase of 2d. or 4d. a cwt. made a very great difference to the working man with a family, and whose employment was very precarious. To such people it might mean a difficulty in keeping the fire alight at all. The Returns showed that coal had been exported from this country to foreign countries in the past year to an amount representing about £14,000,000 or £15,000,000. We had the good fortune in this country to have a practical monopoly of the coal which was fitted for the steam navies of the world. A tax of 1s. a ton had been placed upon the export of coal, and it had brought in a very large revenue indeed; but that had been taken away, and he wanted to know how it was going to be replaced. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was in urgent need of money to carry out old-age pensions, which they had all of them been most anxious to bring about for so many years. The real difficulty had been to obtain the money. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer said he saw a way of getting the money, well and good. But who paid the coal tax? The foreign consumers; it was they who had given this country an enormous increase of revenue, which was of immense advantage to the whole country. But that had gone. And what had been the result of the present increased price of coal? In many places our trade and manufacturing industries were in a very serious condition. Profits were becoming less and less, wages were going down, and employment was becoming more and more difficult to obtain. What was the Government's remedy for this state of things? Apparently one remedy which the Secretary for War had—and he supposed he acted in conjunction with his colleagues—was to send orders out of the country, and to employ American trust companies to equip the British Army and to shoe the horses of the British Army. On the closing day of last session, the Financial Secretary to the War Office was asked whether an order for £100,000 worth of horse shoes had recently been placed by the Department in America. The hon. Gentleman said the answer was in the affirmative, and added that in the interests of economical administration he could not stop supplies which were satisfactory as regarded both price and efficiency. He remembered that the hon. Member for Barnard Castle made a speech in which he expressed his strong disapprobation—a disapprobation shared, he believed, by Labour Members, certainly by all the industrial population—of the policy of the Secretary for War, in placing these orders for horse shoes with an American company, when so many farriers, so many connected with the horse industry, were out of employment. The conduct of the Government in this matter and the conduct of the Secretary for War, had not only excited disapprobation among many of their supporters in that House, but also among the electors, as the Government had already found out, and probably would find out to their cost. Looking to the returns, he invariably found that it was during the administration of right hon. Gentlemen opposite that they found this system followed to an extraordinary extent. For the year ending 31st March, 1907, the Government had placed orders for no less than £519,000 worth of goods which could have been perfectly well obtained at home. But no effort had been made to obtain them in this country, and they found the Secretary for War priding himself upon reducing the cost of rations for the Army by £40,000 or £50,000—thus upsetting the policy of his predecessor, that the British Army should be fed as much as possible on home raised meat—saying: "I do not know, and I do not care, where they come from so long as I save a few thousand pounds." The right hon. Gentleman talked about the cost of battalions, but what about the battalions of farmers and labourers and people thrust out of employment, whose living was rendered precarious by this policy of giving preference to the foreigner over our own countrymen? It was a small matter, but he found in the return £71 for benzoline billiard balls. This was an isolated order for spare sets of billiard balls. They ordered the billiard table here, but they took care to get the billiard balls from America, though good billiard balls could be obtained in this country. The Government, in fact, said that they enjoyed the employment of workmen in American factories. This action on their part deserved censure and reprobation, but if they persisted in that conduct he could tell them that they would find many more examples of an election which had recently taken place, and which would, no doubt, bring them to a saner state of mind. He purposely would not go into details as to want of employment; there would be other opportunities of doing so, and of stating the remedies for that evil. He wanted to see some vigorous and firm action on the part of the Government, to put a stop to the evil, which was disclosed in all the Government returns, that had been laid before them by the new Chairman of the Labour Party in that House. He wanted to know what the Government's definite plans and projects were, what it was they proposed to do in order to put a stop to non-employment, and for improving the welfare of the industrial population. There were some details in the measures proposed which were calculated to improve the condition of the working classes, but nothing which would affect the question of non-employment. It was to that he wished the Government to direct their attention, because he shared to the full the observations made by the hon. Member for Barnard Castle when he said that this was the really important question before the country, and if the Government were unable to find a remedy, let them give place to better men who were ready to, and could do something.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire) said he thought that if the Government wanted a certificate of character they could not do better than refer to the speech of the hon. and gallant Member for Central Sheffield, who was an old Parliamentarian, and an able debator. As far as he could make out, the Government had bought some billiard balls in America; but he would not go into that question, because it would be unfair to say that that was the main fault which was found with the Government. The main fault found with them was that various commodities were very much dearer than they were a few years ago. But that was not peculiar to this country. For the last year or two, in France, it had been found that commodities had risen to even a much greater extent than in this country, and there were similar reports from Germany, in fact from all over the world. But did the hon. and gallant Gentleman really believe that commodities would be any cheaper if he taxed them as he proposed to do? He thought that question alone disposed of the hon. Gentleman's argument. He had not risen, however, to go into these matters, but to call attention to the peculiar circumstances attending Scottish legislation promised in the Speech from the Throne. There were only two Bills mentioned with regard to Scotland, and the curious and he believed unprecedented thing was that those Bills had already been passed by the House of Commons. Both the Land Valuation Bill and the Small Land Holders Bill were passed last session by overwhelming majorities. They were considered in Committee by all the Scottish Members, and all the details were thoroughly discussed and passed by large majorities. Why were these two Bills mentioned in the present Speech? Because they had been rejected by the House of Lords. Now the reason so far for refusing to pass them was that those Bills went against the will of the Scottish people, who did not wish for them. That might or might not be so. It was true that they had heard of Bills being passed for Scotland, and being promoted in Scotland, that were unpopular. In such cases the people of Scotland affected by these measures immediately protested most vigorously against them. Public meetings were called and resolutions were passed condemning them. Had any such thing happened in reference to these measures? Speaking for his part of Scotland, he did not think a single open meeting had been called at which a resolution condemning the Small Land Holder's Bill had been passed. In his experience no Bill had ever been so thoroughly discussed as the Small Land Holders Bill. It followed, therefore, that Scottish members representing rural constituencies must know the opinion of the electors in regard to this Bill better than almost any Bill of recent time. That Bill was again going to be submitted to the House. Did anyone imagine that Scottish Members who had got to look to the support of their constituents were going to vote for the Scottish Bills mentioned in the King's Speech if they thought Scotland did not want them? What had happened in Scotland during the autumn was overwhelming proof that the Scottish people were almost unanimous in their desire for such legislation. Personally he thought it was quite possible that they might also have an Education Bill for Scotland. There was one thing, however, he wished to warn the Government against; he hoped they would not bring forward any Bill that they could not pass. Scotland in the past had been too much accustomed to measures being brought forward and afterwards dropped. He trusted that whatever might be the nature of the Education Bill, whether it was large or small, the Government would not attempt to bring it forward if it had to be dropped like so many of its predecessors.

MR. FELL (Great Yarmouth) said he wished to refer to the question of the establishment of a large dockyard on the eastern coast. Upon this question the policy of the Government appeared to have been changed. The great fleet which used to be kept in the Mediterranean had now been transferred to the North Sea. It was considered on all hands by the naval authorities that the North Sea was the place in which operations on a large scale were more likely to take place than any other, and experiments had been made to find out the most suitable place for the establishment of a dockyard, where the ships of His Majesty's Fleet could be repaired. He was aware that Sheerness might be described as a dockyard on the East Coast, and it had been supposed to be suitable for the repairs required for the North Sea Fleet in the past. They had to remember, however, that enormous ironclads of the "Dreadnought" type could not be got into Sheerness, because there was not a sufficient depth of water. He understood that it was the intention of the Government materially to deepen the entrance to the Sheerness dockyard. Nevertheless, it would be a long time before that dockyard would be capable of receiving great ironclads and doing their repairs. At present, if large ironclads in the North Sea required repairs, they had to return to Portsmouth, and that might be a very hazardous and dangerous thing to do in the face of an enemy. Some years ago a site was pitched upon in the Firth of Forth which was considered suitable for such a dockyard as was required for the North Sea Fleet, and that place was Rosyth. Experiments had been made there testing the water supply and the nature of the rock, and inquiries had been made as to the expense and as to whether it would form a suitable naval base. He noticed that last year a very small sum of money was spent upon Rosyth, and the number of men employed there was really very trivial. During the autumn they had been informed that it had now been definitely and finally decided that the work at Rosyth was to be energetically commenced and that this would in future be looked upon as the new great dockyard on the East Coast. He should have thought that a matter of such importance as that would have been referred to in the King's Speech. Had that been done he was sure the country would have greeted the announcement with satisfaction. They all agreed that it was necessary to keep a large fleet in the North Sea, and it was necessary to have a suitable place where the repairs of that fleet could be done. Of course, it rested with the Government to suggest such a place. He had hoped that the operations at Rosyth would have been commenced this year, but they would now have to wait until the Navy Estimates came forward when they would probably be told it was the intention of the Government to continue the operations at Rosyth. With regard to the drainage work at Rosyth, he hoped they would not make the same mistake as was made at Haulbowline and Keyham, where the original contract stated that the material to be used should be Irish limestone, and later that stipulation was modified to English granite. The contractors were at last, however, allowed to use Norwegian granite, and that was the only material used at Haulbowline. He feared that the same thing might happen at Rosyth, and that would be a subject of great regret to himself and his friends who were of opinion that such work as this should be done with the best English material wherever possible. The Thames Embankment was an example of the kind of granite which could be obtained in England. When the Government considered the contracts which were now being given to Norway had they any idea of the wages paid to the Norwegians who cut the granite? Did the Norwegians receive trade union wages and work Englishmen's hours? He hoped that during the session this question would be thrashed out in order that they might ascertain exactly under what conditions Norwegian granite was cut, what wages were paid, and whether the work was done under conditions which gave Englishmen a fair chance of competing. He hoped the Government would be able to assure them that the work at Rosyth in regard to the formation of the dockyard was going on actively, and that they would see that English material and English labour were employed as much as possible.

MR. MACLEAN (Bath) said the hon. and gallant Member for Sheffield had referred to the removal of the tax upon coal. He would like to remind him that the present Chancellor of the Exchequer and his predecessor were agreed as to the advisability of the removal of the coal tax. In regard to the coal trade generally, it was admitted that by far the greater proportion of the coal shipped was carried by our own traders. How immensely important was the export of coal to the question with regard to our own tonnage! Of course we were enabled to bring back raw materials to this country at low freights solely owing to the fact that we were sending out tonnage in vessels carrying coal. For instance, the Black Sea freights were at their present moderate figure owing entirely to the fact that we exported coal to that part of the world. These practical considerations were entirely overlooked by hon. Members on the other side of the House. Reference had been made to the question of horse shoes purchased abroad. It was true we had spent money in buying horse shoes in America or elsewhere, but they also knew that the action of the Government in that respect had had a beneficial effect, because the Secretary for War was now able to force contracts for horse shoes in this country at a reasonable price. The makers here had evidently learned a lesson which obviously they needed. He was glad the Government proposed to amend the licensing law, and would only express the hope that the Bill would contain some method to prohibit women from taking children into public houses. He was glad to know also that they proposed to amend the law for the protection of children. It was to be hoped that that measure would prevent the enormous number of deaths which occurred yearly from overlaying. Another point which had a bearing on child life was that of housing. He quoted a paragraph from a report presented to the House last session on the physical condition of children attending the Board Schools in Glasgow. The information placed before that Committee showed that the physical condition of children from one-roomed houses was inferior to that of children from two roomed houses, and so on. The Bill for the housing of the working classes he hoped would lead to some amelioration of the condition of children. The people of the country at last appreciated the fact that the protection of the State was due to the child from the day of its birth as well as to adult citizens.

*MR. SUMMERBELL (Sunderland) expressed the hope that in dealing with the question of old-age pensions the Government would pay no heed to what had fallen from the hon. Member for Sheffield, namely, that coal or something else should be taxed in order to get the necessary money for old-age pensions. He thought the only legitimate way to get money for old-age pensions was to say that those who had incomes of £2,000 and over should provide the necessary money. It was an admitted fact that people were poor because the economic conditions under which they lived did not enable them to provide for their support in old age. The hon. Member for Sheffield had advised the Government, if they could not find a remedy for unemployment, to clear out and allow others to take their place. He was a poor man who could not sympathise with unemployed workers who had wives and families dependent upon them; but to suggest that the remedy for the evil was to be found in the introduction of protection was an insult to the workers of this country. There were at present in Berlin 53,000 unemployed, and yet Germany was a protectionist country. Men were clamouring for the opportunity to work, and they were appealing to the Government to take taxes off the food of the people. In America the same thing would be found; shiploads of people were leaving that country on account of unemployment. Did the hon. Member for Sheffield think that by taxing billiard balls and horse shoes they could find a remedy for unemployment? To say that protection would solve the question of the unemployed was to talk pure nonsense. The only hope of a part solution, he contended, lay in a bold dealing by the Government with the land question, by which the people might be brought back to the land, and millions of acres might once more be tilled. He warned the Government that the manhood of the country would very soon assert itself unless they were prepared to tackle the problem. In his opinion the cause of much unemployment was that land had been allowed to go out of cultivation. They were importing food from abroad which could be produced in this country if the land were properly utilised. Go where they would in England they would find barren wastes which ought to be converted into smiling fields. What did the hon. Member for Sheffield and his friends do when a measure was brought forward with the object of enabling people to go on to land which had gone out of cultivation? They made every effort to resist it, and so to prevent the solution of the problem. No tariffs would settle the problem, and he appealed to the Government to make a bold stand on the land question and try and get the unemployed workers back on to the land. During the past sixty years about 1,000,000 people had been driven off the land, with the result that the towns were crowded with citizens on the verge of starvation. He was glad that the Government were going to deal with certain phases of the land question. He would give them his hearty support, believing it was in that direction that a remedy would be found in some measure at least for the evil of unemployment.

*MR. R. DUNCAN (Lanarkshire, Govan) said that it must have struck any one looking at the Royal declaration that a great responsibility lay on the Government, not merely for the affairs of the United Kingdom, but for those of the most extended dominion that the world had ever seen. He was glad to find in the Speech from the Throne a statement of the conditions and relations which now existed between this country and foreign nations, especially with Russia, with whom, not so far back in our history, we were on the verge of a great conflict. He was glad that the spirit of peace and conciliation prevailed in the minds of all the Governments of Europe. Questions of humanity were involved in the good government of Macedonia and the Congo State; and he wished to express approval of the wisdom of the Government in recognising their duty in dealing with other Powers to secure reforms in these countries. He complained that only two small allusions were made in the King's Speech to Greater Britain; and he could have wished that more of the spirit of responsibility had been shown, not merely for the United Kingdom but also for the United Empire. They on that side of the House were of one mind on that subject, and did not consider questions from the little-England, little-Scotland or little-Ireland point of view. The question of the migration of Japanese to Canada was a type of the subjects which were coming more and more to the front. Race questions were very difficult indeed. Were they to treat all races alike, or was there to be some real distinction to be made between people of different races and colour? He was glad that there was a paragraph in the King's Speech dealing with the famine in India. He regretted along with some former speakers that there was no recognition in the Speech of the state of unemployment in this country, and it struck him that that was rather strange when a gentleman occupied a seat on the Front Government Bench whose reputation depended on his sympathy with the unemployed and his struggles on their behalf. He knew from practical experience that unemployment in this country often depended upon tariffs in other countries, and he was sorry that tariff walls had been raised in other countries against our products. Industrial history showed us cases of established trades which were cut off as by the blow of an axe by a hostile tariff. Women's trades had suffered severely in this way. He hoped that the House would do something to protect women's work in the United Kingdom. He could not help thinking that that was a question which was worthy of the consideration of the Government, which ought to look into the causes of unemployment and get at the real facts of the case, and not be content with quack remedies. So far as his voice had any weight, he wished to express the opinion that in every King's Speech, year after year, the question of employment or unemployment should find a place.

MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs) said that so far from agreeing with the last speaker he thought they greatly erred in taking upon themselves a particular part in interfering with the conduct of affairs in other sovereign nations. It seemed to him that while they were right to sympathise in company with other countries with the people of Macedonia, they ought not to go one inch beyond that. This country never meant to go to war for Macedonia, and the excessive expression of empty sympathy on our part merely brought down upon the people the natural resentment of their masters, who would continue to be their masters so far as we were concerned. The first two measures mentioned in the Speech from the Throne would, he was sure, be received with great satisfaction in Wales. From his own constituency he had received a numerously signed petition to Parliament stating that the electors of Newtown, Montgomeryshire, greatly desired that there should be included in the forthcoming Licensing Bill a clause to safe-guard children under the age of fourteen by precluding them from entering bars and drinking premises, and prohibiting the sale of intoxicants to anyone under eighteen years of age. The seconder of the Address had referred to the famine in India, and had spoken of our responsibility where so many people were perishing from starvation. It was by no means the case that the people of India perished for want of assistance from the Government. The whole of the resources of the Government were at the disposal of the Indian people for the saving of human life. During the period of the greatest famine in India in modern times, 6,000,000 of people were in receipt of out-door relief. That meant that 2 per cent. of the Indian population were in receipt of out-door relief, while in this country 2·2 per cent. had been in receipt of out-door relief during the same period. There was no longer famine in India in the old acceptation of the word. The moment prices of food rose beyond a certain point, the Government provisions for meeting famine came automatically into operation, and relief works were established on which the people were employed at slightly lower rates than their ordinary pay. Nothing was more painful than to see the manner in which, when there was any failure of crops in India, the problem of the government of that country was subjected to a torrent of misrepresentation, sometimes, he feared, malevolent, and the true facts entirely obscured. He hoped that when this question came under consideration again, it would be remembered that in the gravest famine, or so-called famine, in India in modern times, there were fewer people unrelieved in India, than there were in this country in any year. He was quite sure, however, that the hon. Gentleman who had brought this subject forward was not actuated by any malevolent ideas in regard to the government of India; of that, he freely absolved him. He had it in his mind to say this and nothing else, but since he was speaking, he would refer to what the Leader of the Opposition had said as to the Anglo-Russian Convention. Had that dealt with Persian affairs alone, he should have agreed with him that it was eminently desirable that the Persian Gulf should be brought in, and that the line should have run across the centre of the Gulf. He agreed in that event, the line should run in the direction which the speech of the right hon. Gentleman indicated, and which was also indicated in a speech by Lord Curzon. But what they had to remember in regard to the Anglo-Russian Convention was that the Persian question was part of a whole, and the agreement arrived at in regard to Afghanistan was so satisfactory that, to his mind, it covered the Persian sub-issue. He did not for a moment forget that the Agreement confirmed to Russia all that she had and did not confirm to us all that we had; but he thought that, when they saw how satisfactory the Convention had been with respect to the frontiers of India—and it was with that view that it was made, and it was for that reason that the points raised about the Gulf were excluded—it must be allowed that the arrangement was on the whole a good one, and it was perhaps unwise to cavil about points that affected any particular country. With regard to Tibet for instance; he regretted very much that the expedition which was sent there proved so fruitless, and that all we gained was given up, but it must be pointed out that it was the late Government who gave up the results of that expedition, and it certainly would be most unjust to visit on the head of a Liberal Government the mere continuance of arrangements which were really those of their predecessors in office. He believed, as he had said, that the present arrangement was a good one in the interests of the Indian frontiers and of this country, and so long as we had a sufficient backing of battleships to make us feared, he believed it would be a valuable instrument which would eventually make for peace and prosperity. The hon. Member for Waterford had said that crime in Ireland was less than in England and Wales. He was not concerned with England, but if the hon. Member was going to make a comparison between the crime in Ireland and in Wales, he must point out that it was always well to remember in connection with this subject, that the statistics of Welsh crime were chiefly made up by the figures of Glamorganshire and of the great seaports in Glamorganshire, the population of which was made up of other people than Welshmen. He thought it behoved him as a Welshman to make that explanation. Glamorganshire was, he believed, the most criminal county in the United Kingdom, but that was chiefly because of the foreigners who came to its seaports. He heartily agreed with the remark made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he begged hon. Members who felt strongly, as they all did, as to the case of the Indians in the Transvaal to let that matter alone to be settled by those concerned and those who had the settlement of it. He sincerely hoped the right hon. Gentleman's advice would be taken to heart, and he should take it to heart by saying no more on the subject, though he felt very strongly about it, knowing as he did, the feeling in England, and what was not of less importance the feelings of India, which had been needlessly hurt by the discussions which had taken place. He had hoped to have been able to speak to the Under-Secretary for the Colonies in respect of certain communications in Nyassaland, in which he happened to be closely interested and also in regard to the appointment of the members of the newly created Legislative Council, but as the Under-Secretary was not present he would defer his remarks. He would only take the opportunity of congratulating him on his safe return from Central Africa, which he attributed under Providence—and he was sure the hon. Member for Buckinghamshire would agree with what he said—to the fact that lions did not prey on their own species.

Motion made, and Question, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Ramsey Macdonald,*)—put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

Adjournment. — Motion made, and Question, "That this House do now adjourn, — (*Mr. Whiteley,*) — put, and agreed to.

Adjourned at twenty - three minutes after Nine o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 30th January, 1908.

BARON CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

Petition of George Nathaniel Curzon, Baron Curzon of Kedleston, in the Peerage of Ireland, claiming a right to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland; read, and referred to the Lord Chancellor to consider and report thereupon to the House.

Report made from the Lord Chancellor that the right of George Nathaniel Curzon, Baron Curzon of Kedleston, in the Peerage of Ireland, to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland has been established to the satisfaction of the Lord Chancellor; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

Ordered, That the Report of the Lord Chancellor of the United Kingdom, made to the House of Lords this day, that the right of the Baron Curzon of Kedleston to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland has been established to his satisfaction, be sent to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland, together with a certificate stating that such report has been made, and that the House has ordered it to be sent to the said Clerk of the Crown in Ireland.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Crown Jewels Commission (Ireland).—Report of the Vice-regal Commission appointed to investigate the circumstances of the loss of the Regalia of the Order of Saint Patrick, and to inquire whether Sir Arthur Vicars exercised due vigilance and proper care as the custodian thereof.

Board of Agriculture and Fisheries.—Annual Report on the distribution of grants for Agricultural Education and Research in the year 1906–1907; with statements respecting the several colleges and institutions aided, and a summary of the agricultural instruction provided by county councils in 1906–1907, and the expenditure on the same.

Explosives (Explosion at the Factory of Messrs. Kynoch, Limited, Worsboro' Dale, near Barnsley).—Report to the Secretary of State for the Home Department on the circumstances attending an explosion which occurred in the press house at the factory of Messrs. Kynoch, Limited, at Worsboro' Dale, near Barnsley, in the county of Yorkshire, on the 12th December, 1907, by Major A. Cooper-Key, His Majesty's Inspector of Explosives.

Agricultural Statistics (Ireland).—Tables showing the extent in statute acres, produce of the crops, and the numbers of live stock, for the year 1907.

Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887.—Return of the number of eviction notices filed during the quarter ended 31st December, 1907.

Treaty Series, No. 3 (1908).—Exchange of notes between the United Kingdom and France, arrangements under Article X., Section 4, of the Convention of 20th October, 1906, respecting the New Hebrides, 29th August, 1907.

Army (Special Reserve).—Form of attestation to be used for enlisting militiamen as special reservists under the Territorial and Reserve Forces Bill.

(Imperial Yeomanry in Great Britain and Ireland).—Training Return, 1907.

Navy (Estimates).—Navy Estimates for the year 1908–1909, with explanation of differences; Statement of First Lord of the Admiralty, explanatory of the Navy Estimates, 1908–1909.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

Army (Rules of Procedure, 1907).—New edition of Rules of Procedure for Courts-martial, containing rules for field punishments.

Workmen's Compensation Act, 1906 (Regulations as to Returns from Employers).—Regulations, dated 15th January 1908, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, under Section 12 of the Act, as to returns to be furnished each year by employers in certain industries with respect to the compensation paid under the Act during the previous year.

Factory and Workshop (Particulars of Piece-work Wages (Brass)).—Order, dated 23rd September, 1907, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, applying the provisions of Section 116 of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, with modifications to factories

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

and workshops in which the mixing, casting, or manufacture of brass, or of articles of brass is carried on.

(Fruit Preserving).—Order, dated 11th September, 1907, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department in pursuance of Sections 41 and 58 of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, prescribing conditions to be observed in factories and workshops in which women or young persons are employed in the process of cleaning or preparing fruit, in pursuance of the special exemption allowed by Section 41.

Penal Servitude Acts, 1853–1891 (Conditional Licences)—

I. Orders granted by His Majesty under the provisions of the Penal Servitude Acts, 1853–1891, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A. of the Penal Servitude Act, 1864, to Daniel Condron; to William Wood.

II. Licence granted by His Majesty to Ada Wheeler, a convict under detention in Aylesbury Prison, permitting her to be at large on condition that she enter the East End Refuge, Finchley, N.

III. Licence granted by His Majesty to Elizabeth Davies, a convict under detention in Aylesbury Prison, permitting her to be at large on condition that she enter the Home of Compassion, 63, Sutherland Street, S.W.

Polling Districts (County of Essex).—Order made by the council of the county of Essex altering certain polling districts in the Eastern or Malden Parliamentary Division of the county.

Shop Hours Act, 1904—

I. (County of Lancaster).—Order made by the council of the county of Lancaster, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the hours of closing for certain classes of shops within the Urban District of Ashton-in-Makerfield.

II. Closing orders made by the urban district council of Omagh; the council of the county borough of Londonderry.

Pharmacy (Ireland) Acts, 1875 and 1890.—Order in Council, dated 24th January, 1908, approving of a regulation made by the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland.

Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland.—Importation of Horses, Asses, and Mules (Ireland) Order, 1907; Importation of Horses, Asses, and Mules (Ireland) Order, 1907, No. 2.

Winter Assizes (Ireland).—Four Orders in Council, dated 5th November, 1907, for holding winter assizes in Ireland.

Pawnbrokers (Ireland).—Returns from the City Marshal of Dublin for 1906.

Intermediate Education (Ireland).—Time table of examinations for 1908.

General Prisons (Ireland) Act, 1877, and the Prisons (Ireland) Act, 1907.—Order in Council approving of rules made by the General Prisons Board for the government of ordinary prisons in Ireland.

West Highland Railway (Extension from Banavie to Mallaig).—Sixth Annual Report by the Board of Trade as to the condition and working of the Banavie to Mallaig Railway, the rates and charges for traffic, and the receipts and expenditure of any company in working the railway, for the year 1906–1907.

Superannuation. — Treasury Minute dated 14th January, 1908, declaring that Sir R. Hay Drummond-Hay, His Majesty's Consul-General, Beirat, formerly Clerk to the Mission at Tangier, was appointed without a Civil Service certificate through inadvertence on the part of the head of his Department.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

ADDRESS IN REPLY TO HIS MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

Order of the Day for the resuming the debate on the Motion for an humble Address to His Majesty, read.

The Marquess of LONDONDERRY: My Lords, I feel sure that there is no one in this country who has studied Irish affairs during the past year, and no one in your Lordships' House who listened to the Irish portion of my noble friend Lord Lansdowne's eloquent speech last night, will be surprised that I rise for the purpose of calling attention to the present condition of Ireland. To say the least of it, the condition of certain parts of Ireland is anything but satisfactory. I know it is said by those who are politically opposed to myself and to my noble friends behind me that the condition of Ireland is very seriously exaggerated. I say, with perfect sincerity and truth, that I, and those behind me who are associated with Ireland, have never desired to throw the question of Ireland into the party arena; we are actuated solely by our desire to see that country peaceful, law-abiding, and prosperous. Consequently I do not hesitate to say that I should indeed be a happy man were I standing here to-day to tell your Lordships that the pessimistic prognostications to which I in this House and my friends from Ireland in another place have on previous occasions given utterance had been absolutely falsified by the events of the last year. I regret that that is not the case, because we all desire, no matter what our political feelings are, to see Ireland, if possible, governed under a system of ordinary law.

I do not speak on this question without a certain amount of experience. To my mind at the present moment the condition of Ireland is undoubtedly more serious than it has been during the past thirty or forty years. In the dark days of the early eighties I was the representative of an Irish county, and since that time I have been closely associated with all matters connected with Ireland. Naturally my mind goes back to those dark days, when there was crime in all parts of Ireland, and when the Chief Secretary and the Permanent Secretary were murdered in the centre of Phœnix Park. I was Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland in the dark days of 1886–87, when crime and outrage stalked unchecked through certain parts of the country—unchecked because it could not be detected. Yet, in spite of those experiences, I cannot but think that the present condition of certain parts of Ireland is even more serious now than it was then.

I know that the open crime which existed in those days does not exist now. But why does it not exist now? The reason is that, owing to the system of intimidation and terrorism prevailing, such crime is not required to effect its former object, for the tyrannical law of the League has entirely superseded in those districts the law of the land. There is, too, a total demoralisation of those who are responsible for the administration of the law in Ireland in the districts affected. To what is this due? I say without hesitation that it is due entirely to the action of His Majesty's present Government. The law-breakers in the districts to which I am alluding do not hesitate to declare, and their unfortunate dupes who listen to them believe, that in their acts of lawlessness they have the Government at their back.

But the demoralisation has spread further than that. Judges are demoralised, knowing full well that, however strongly they may charge a jury, there will be no conviction. Then what is the position of the juries? It is well known to those who have studied the Irish question that trial by jury in the districts where this lawlessness prevails is an absolute farce, for witnesses are terrified and intimidated, so that they dare not give evidence which would convict. Benches of magistrates in those districts have been packed by men who are absolutely in touch with the law-breakers, and consequently trial in petty sessions is a complete farce.

Then I come to another question quite as serious—that of the police. The Irish Constabulary, who once were the finest body of men to be found in any country, are naturally demoralised, and are now employed to drive back cattle on to the farms. It is common rumour, and I shall be glad to be contradicted if it is not so, that the police have been instructed not to come into contact with the law-breakers unless there is a case of absolute riot. I believe I am justified in saying that in many cases members of this highly trained and admirable body have had to stand by and see illegalities carried on because they believed it was not the desire of the Government that they should prevent them. Therefore I say that all those associated with the preserving of law and order in Ireland are demoralised, so much so that at the present moment the state of things is more serious than in the dark days to which I have alluded.

Who is responsible for this state of demoralisation? I think it can be proved that the present extraordinary condition of affairs is entirely due to the action of the Chief Secretary and his colleagues. On leaving Ireland Mr. Bryce stated, in a speech at Newcastle, that the condition of Ireland was very reassuring, and later—in April last—Mr. Birrell stated that—

> "Ireland is at the present moment in a more peaceful condition than it has been for the last 600 years."

So that on succeeding to his post the right hon. Gentleman had nothing to complain of. We naturally look to Mr. Birrell, as the Minister responsible for the condition of Ireland, and we have it on the authority of Mr. Asquith that the policy which I maintain has reduced Ireland to a state of disorder in little less than nine months, has been deliberately adopted and approved by the Cabinet. I should like to ask the noble Earl the Lord President of the Council whether he admits that this is a policy for which the Cabinet are collectively responsible, and whether he thinks it is one which commends itself to law-abiding people. The noble Earl in a speech in this House in June last repudiated, with considerable emphasis, the suggestion that the Government had any intention of dealing other than in the fullest manner with such disorder; yet at Watford, in January, he stated that the policy to which I have alluded not only had his support, but admitted that it was a make-shift policy. I ask the noble Earl how he can reconcile those two statements.

Shortly after Mr. Birrell succeeded Mr. Bryce there began in certain parts of Ireland what is known as cattle-driving. It began on a very small scale in the County Galway. At first it was a cloud little bigger than a man's hand, but it has spread over eight or nine or even ten counties. It is due entirely to the fact that the Chief Secretary would not listen to the advice of men who knew Ireland and had only the interests of Ireland at heart. He ignored the advice of these men and described them in the somewhat inelegant term of "carrion crows." He accused them of trying to make political capital out of what was going on in Ireland. I can only say that our only object was to assure a man new to Ireland—a great lawyer, a great literary man, but absolutely ignorant of the ways of Irish people—that if he took action in time he could stop cattle-driving. Had Mr. Birrell read the speeches of some of Ireland's orators in the past he would have recognised what was said by one, that—

> "The Irish are a dangerous nation to run away from."

Members of the Government and of the Executive in Ireland have pleaded extenuating circumstances in reference to cattle-driving, and I believe those speeches have led the people of Ireland to believe that the agitators, when they advocated cattle-driving, had the Government at their backs.

Let me quote a few passages. Mr. Birrell himself asked us in Parliament to distinguish between cattle-driving and cattle-lifting, and declared that cattle-driving should not cause any great measure of surprise. I do not know what English farmers would say if there was a proposal to drive their cattle for miles down the roads. I do not know whether the noble Earl the President of the Board of Agriculture would dare to ask any of his agricultural supporters in the House of Commons to go down to a market town and say they regarded cattle-driving as a proceeding which should not cause surprise. I doubt very much if any of those gentlemen would be returned again. I believe the result of the Mid-Devon by-election was to a great extent due to the fact that many gentlemen came over from Ireland and explained to the farmers what cattle-driving really meant, and the opinion of His Majesty's Government regarding it. The noble Marquess the Leader of the Opposition alluded last night to the unfortunate declaration of Lord Denman. I do not know whether that noble Lord spoke for himself, but I conclude he was speaking on behalf of the Government; he no doubt had his answer written out for him when he told your Lordships that the Government did not consider cattle-driving to be a crime of a very serious character.

As late as October, Mr. T. W. Russell the Minister for Agriculture and the successor of Sir Horace Plunkett, referred to—

> "The comparatively harmless process of cattle-driving."

I think that noble Lords opposite would have some difficulty in persuading agriculturists in this country that cattle-driving is a harmless operation. These speeches are understood in Ireland to mean that the Government not only do not disapprove of cattle-driving, but even connive at it, and that the law-breakers are at perfect liberty to carry on this abominable system.

I think I have shown your Lordships to what a serious condition Ireland has been brought. What are His Majesty's Government going to do? How do they propose to deal with Ireland in its present serious condition? Without being a partisan, without in the least wishing to advocate ideas that I hold myself, I challenge any noble Lord on the opposite side of the House to say that he considers the present state of things in Ireland satisfactory. I ask the Government, How do you propose to deal with it? In June last the noble Earl the Lord President of the Council said that—

> "Such disorder and illegality as exists can be dealt with under the ordinary law of the country."

Does the noble Earl stand by that argument? The noble Marquess the Leader of your Lordships' House said that the Government would act under the ordinary law until the ordinary law failed. I would ask, Does the noble Marquess consider that the ordinary law has done its work, or does he consider that the ordinary law has failed? That was a very remarkable statement to be made by the Leader of your Lordships' House. I assert that the ordinary law has entirely failed in Ireland.

The figures I have in my hand show how unsuccessful have been the Government's attempts to obtain the punishment of wrong-doers. The number of persons tried at the summer and winter assizes and before the King's Bench Division in Dublin was 237, and the number of persons convicted was only eight. The jury disagreed in 158 cases; the number of persons acquitted was fifty-six; and the number of prosecutions abandoned was fifteen. Can the Government therefore rely on the ordinary law? The Government are beginning to realise the danger of the situation. In December last Mr. Asquith said—

> "No one pretends that the condition of Ireland, from the point of view of social order, is satisfactory."

That is a great admission, and differs from what we have been told by others. Mr. Cherry, the Attorney-General [for Ireland, and therefore a gentleman who ought to know, said—

> "It was, in fact, a worse condition of things than was to be met with among the savages of West Africa. There exists nothing more nor less than mob law."

That is the statement of your Attorney-General, and not of a "carrion crow." Then we had the admission of the noble Earl the Lord President of the Council that there was regrettable disorder and unrest.

The Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, Lord Aberdeen, speaking in Scotland, made the excuse that only four or five counties might be called disturbed areas. That is a remarkable statement. In the first place it is incorrect, because there are at least eight or nine, if not ten, counties in this disturbed state. But I maintain that the humblest subject of His Majesty in Ireland has full right to have protection for life and property. Mr. Cherry has stated that if these things were allowed to go unchecked and unpunished a state of anarchy would result. This is the statement of the Law Officer of the Crown. Are the Government still going to allow persons who deserve punishment to go unpunished? I do not hesitate to say that to my mind the policy of the Government during the past year has been a policy of cowardice. They have prosecuted the dupes and the miserable "corner boys"; why have they not prosecuted the leaders? Mr. Birrell told us that his fingers itched to prosecute Mr. Ginnell. But why didn't he? It is true that Mr. Ginnell is now in gaol, but he was imprisoned, not by the action of the present Government, but by Judge Ross for having been guilty of contempt of Court. A more contemptible state of things I cannot imagine.

When we were in office in 1887 we put into gaol the leaders of disorder and not the unfortunate dupes, with the result that our policy of courage was successful, and within eighteen months of putting the Crimes Act into operation we had restored to Ireland law and order, peace and prosperity. I read the other day with the greatest interest a speech delivered by Mr. Morley, who had great difficulties to encounter in India in the restoration of law and order. Mr. Morley's speech was that of a statesman. He declared, in regard to India, that the maintenance of order was the foundation of future progress, and that violent disorder must be put down with a firm hand. What is the difference between maintaining law and order in India and maintaining law and order in Ireland? After the strong views which Mr. Morley expressed in regard to India, I would like to ask whether he agrees with what his colleagues in the Cabinet are doing in regard to Ireland. We in England like to criticise our competitors in foreign countries, but what must be their opinion when they endeavour to compare the speech of Mr. Morley with regard to the Government's policy in India with the Government's policy in Ireland, where a state of lawlessness exists which is a disgrace and a scandal to a civilised country?

It has been said that cattle-driving is dead. I believe from what I hear that to a certain extent it has been abandoned in certain parts, but to say that cattle-driving is dead in the disturbed parts of Ireland is a statement which is absolutely refuted by the facts published in the Irish newspapers. I fully recognise that high Roman Catholic ecclesiastics and lay leaders have recently spoken against cattle-driving, but they have done so, not because they repudiate the principle of cattle-driving, but because they fear that if it is allowed to continue they may lose the benefit of certain measures which they hope to obtain for Roman Catholics and the Nationalist Party. I believe myself that a "deal" has been arrived at between the Government, the Roman Catholic hierarchy, and the Nationalists. That opinion undoubtedly prevails in Ireland. If that deal falls through, if Mr. Birrell's proposals do not come up to the expectations of this combination, is cattle-driving to be revived? I read only a few days ago the speech of Mr. FitzGibbon, Chairman of the Roscommon County Council and one of the leaders of the movement. He said—

> "A vigorous agitation will await the Government if the promised measures are not up to expectations."

Other speeches of a similar kind have been made, and therefore I maintain that cattle-driving is not dead; it is ready for use again if the Government's Bills do not come up to the expectations of the Nationalists.

Mr. Asquith said, in the course of his speech yesterday, that—

> "There have been certain cases as to which, be it observed, no Crimes Act would be of the least use, for the simple reason that the difficulty is not in obtaining a conviction, but in obtaining the evidence, and without evidence not even a drum-head Court-martial can convict."

Mr. Asquith cannot have consulted his colleague, the Attorney-General for Ireland, before making that assertion, because Mr. Cherry would have told him that in many prosecutions which have taken place he himself has stated that there was very clear evidence, and yet juries would not convict. The evidence in cases of cattle-driving is abundant. There are hundreds of people there; the police are there; and to say they cannot get evidence is absurd. What they cannot get are convictions. Mr. Asquith also stated yesterday that—

> "Apart from cattle-driving there is very little crime in Ireland."

I differ entirely from Mr. Asquith. He cannot have read the Irish papers. Does not Mr. Asquith know that postmen carrying mailbags have been attacked because they were carrying writs? Has Mr. Asquith not read of process servers, even when surrounded by police, being attacked by large mobs? Has Mr. Asquith not read of houses being fired into and people fired at? This is to a great extent due to the repeal of the Peace Preservation Act, by which men are now enabled to carry weapons.

Has Mr. Asquith not read of the scandalous treatment of Mr. Blake-White and his mother when leaving the parish chapel of Killconicran one Sunday morning? They were shot down in open daylight in the presence of a large number of the congregation, who cheered the shooters and assisted them to escape. Has Mr. Asquith not read the charge of Judge Curran the other day, in which he told the jury of a man's not only being refused a coffin in which to bury his dead brother, but also being denied boards to make the coffin himself? Has Mr. Asquith not read of the large amounts claimed for malicious injuries? Even the property of the Government has not escaped. A farm in Galway belonging to the Department of Agriculture was maliciously burned, £470 compensation being awarded. In the county of Meath alone there are claims for malicious injury amounting to £2,774. But these payments do not fall upon the lawbreakers; they have to be met by the unfortunate ratepayers.

The noble Marquess the Leader of the Opposition stated yesterday that he thought we ought to ask for returns with regard to the condition of certain parts of Ireland. I propose to ask for these returns in the shape of a series of questions, and I hope that before the noble Earl the Lord President of the Council replies, he will consult his advisers in Ireland, so that he may be able to answer the questions fully, fairly, and in a manner which we can thoroughly understand. I ask the Government to answer these questions: (1) What was the number of specially reported cases or agrarian offences for the half-year ended 31st December 1907, and the numbers for the half-years ended 30th June 1906, and 31st December 1906; (2) the number of offences for the same periods in which loaded firearms were used; (3) the number of persons under police protection during the same periods; (4) the number and amounts of the claims for malicious injuries at the quarter sessions held last October and this January, as as compared with the claims made in October 1906, and January 1907; (5) the number of persons indicted in connection with agrarian offences at (*a*) the summer assizes, 1907; (*b*) the winter assizes, 1907; (*c*) in the King's Bench Division, 1907, and the number of persons so indicted who were committed; (6) the number of persons bound over in 1907 in surety for good behaviour on the application of the Crown under the Statute of Edward III.; whether such applications could be heard and disposed of by a single magistrate sitting out of Court; whether the accused, when dealt with on such an application, was unable to give evidence and to call witnesses, and whether, if an order was made against him, he was unable to appeal; and whether, on the other hand, if those cases were heard under the Crimes Act, they would be tried before two magistrates, who would sit in Court, and whether the accused would, if tried under the Crimes Act, have the right to call witnesses, and, if convicted, to appeal to the County Court Judge.

I lay emphasis on the fact of prisoners being tried before one magistrate. I believe there have been many cases during the past few months in which prisoners have been so tried. If that is the case, I venture to say that His Majesty's Government are guilty of the grossest possible inconsistency. They declare that they will not apply the Crimes Act; but in trying a man before one magistrate they are taking more coercive measures than were ever taken under that Act. When tried before one magistrate, the prisoner is not tried in open court, and cannot call witnesses. That is the policy you are pursuing now.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Earl of CREWE): The noble Marquess is speaking solely of the process of binding over to keep the peace.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: But when taken before a Court established under the Crimes Act, a prisoner would be tried by two magistrates in open court and would have the right to call witnesses and a right of appeal. The noble Marquess the Leader of the House told us yesterday that the Government have always denounced the Crimes Act, and do not wish to go back on their words. May I remind the noble Marquess that the Crimes Act of Sir William Harcourt after the murder in Phœnix Park was a much stronger measure than the Crimes Act of 1887? Why will they not now, when they have a weapon at hand ready to deal with this most serious state of affairs, make use of that weapon? Simply on account of their speeches. Well, their speeches are not like the laws of the Medes and Persians; they can be altered. I say, as one who knows Ireland, that if His Majesty's Government allow the present state of affairs to go on spreading, in the future it will be impossible some day to cope with it. On these grounds I ask them honestly to consider whether they should not apply that Act. If they will only take strong steps to prevent the present awful state of affairs they will receive the support of every law-abiding man in Ireland. If, on the other hand, they continue in their present course of action, the condition of Ireland will only become worse, and they will be held responsible for tolerating a state of things which is a disgrace to the Government of any civilised community.

*LORD CLONBROCK: My Lords, I rise to support my noble friend. In my own neighbourhood considerable agitation has prevailed, and cattle-driving is there the chief feature. There have not been, I am happy to say, any outrages with firearms such as were mentioned by the noble Marquis before me last night. I myself have been subjected to considerable annoyance, but I do not wish to dwell on my personal experience as I am no worse off than many others. With regard to cattle-driving, incorrect impressions seem to prevail as to what it really is. I have heard it spoken of as a rough kind of practical joke, as if the only injury that the grazier suffered was that he had the trouble of putting the cattle back again. The case is widely different from that. It is not that the cattle are driven off, but that the grazier is absolutely prevented from putting them back again; he is warned by the constabulary that it would not be safe for him to do so. The land therefore is left derelict.

I should like to say a word in commendation of the way in which the constabulary have discharged their duty. They have under the most adverse circumstances shown unremitting zeal, intelligence, and ability. They have been exposed to the greatest hardship, patrolling the country day and night in the hope of preventing these outrages; but what can a few policemen do against a crowd of hundreds of persons? This cattle-driving is not confined to eleven-months farms. It has taken place on farms with long tenancies and on farms which have not been occupied by any of the smaller people for a hundred years. There have even been cases of cattle-driving on farms which have been purchased from the Estates Commissioners. There was a case in a county adjacent to mine not long ago where a man who had purchased his farm, paid several instalments, and was absolutely in possession of the land, had his cattle driven a long distance off. When he went to look at his farm he found that the neighbouring people had put their cattle upon it. He proceeded to impound the cattle, but the result was that he was summoned before the court of the United Irish League and had to accept their terms. I do not know what the terms were, but he had to give way.

It may be asked why such men come to terms. In these cases the farmer is often obliged to give way in order to avoid personal danger and boycotting. Few people have an idea of the severity of boycotting. I know a case of a member of an old county family who has been deserted by every one in his employment except one old woman. He is a man of remarkable energy; he has turned his hunters out to grass, and is proceeding to work his farm by himself. He has been seen building up walls that have been maliciously pulled down, and leading his horse to the station to get coal. He is so determined a man that he professes to like this Robinson Crusoe sort of existence rather than otherwise, but it is not everyone that could adopt such an attitude. I mention this to show to what an extent boycotting may be carried. It may be said that the Government cannot prevent boycotting, but it is only the result of the existing agitation. It is only applied to people who resist the agitation or who are not sufficiently active in promoting it. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has complained that the graziers as a rule have not done anything to protect their property. It is very hard to know how they are to do so with the whole country against them. He has also complained that the magistrates do not attend sufficiently at petty sessions. But in certain districts the number of magistrates is necessarily very limited. It is part of my duty, as His Majesty's Lieutenant of the County, to recommend suitable candidates to the Lord Chancellor for the Commission of the Peace, and I have had great difficulty in finding sufficient men fitted to be trusted with the administration of justice. There are many districts in which I should like to see the numbers increased. These cattle-drives, again, generally take place on the property of at least one magistrate of the district, who is debarred from sitting. That disposes at least of one. Then a case may come on where an offence, although not committed on his property, is connected with a cattle-drive on it, and he is equally debarred from sitting. I desire to say this in defence of many magistrates who feel deeply the accusation that magistrates as a whole have neglected their duty.

Cattle-driving, unfortunately, is not the sole form of outrage prevalent in Ireland. The noble Marquess has referred to the difficulty of serving process. I saw the other day that a civil bill officer, though accompanied by nineteen policemen, was attacked by a crowd, who pelted him and the constabulary with mud and filth of one description and another. They seized the processes and tore them up. The constabulary did their best, but they were completely overpowered. The fact is that the King's writ does not run in the country, and complete anarchy prevails. And then we are told that "force is no remedy," and that the Government intend to govern Ireland in accordance with Irish ideas, adopting a phrase once used by my noble friend below me, Lord Dudley. If the present condition of things is a sample of the government of Ireland according to Irish ideas, we must suppose that it means that graziers are to be treated as outlaws and are not entitled to protection and that every one else is at liberty to do what is right in his own eyes and to make free with other people's property. I confess I never quite understood the precise meaning of the phrase, but I am quite sure my noble friend did not mean that.

I do not say that the Government intended to encourage the agitation, but the people have been encouraged by the light and airy way in which it has been treated by Members of the Government and by the little that was done to stop it. One cannot doubt that these poor ignorant people are exploited by Members of Parliament, and that they are not as culpable as those who are allowed to instigate them with perfect impunity by His Majesty's Government. The people have often said that they have the Government at their back and we cannot wonder at it. A measure is announced for acquiring land by compulsion. Now the object of compulsion is to get land cheap, for plenty of land is available without compulsion if a proper price is paid for it, and these people think, therefore, that, by rendering the land derelict, they are doing a service to the Government. I am far from saying that His Majesty's Government approve of these tactics, but I wish that they would state more emphatically than they have done their disapproval and show their disapproval by their acts and extend the protection of the law to all law-abiding people, even though they happen to be graziers.

*THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE: My Lords, your Lordships will remember the speech which was delivered in Bristol on Tuesday last by the Chief Secretary, in which he expressed his delight at the prospect that he was going to face his enemies in Parliament and to have the opportunity of defending his administration in Ireland. Your Lordships will notice the alacrity with which his colleagues and supporters in this House are getting up to defend him. We have had a speech from a distinguished ex-Viceroy of Ireland, and a speech from a noble Lord who has had his cattle driven as much as anybody in Ireland. We have had an exposition lasting an hour and ten minutes of the state of Ireland, and neither noble Lord who has spoken is thought worthy of an immediate answer. I regret this extremely, and I am sorry that it should fall to my lot to pound the same horse. I would really have liked to have heard what His Majesty's Government had to say before troubling your Lordships.

There is no necessity now to describe what cattle-driving is. In spite of the fact that its very existence was for so very long denied, I think that what it is has been brought home pretty clearly to people on this side of St. George's Channel. But I want to say one word as to its cause, because Mr. Asquith last night gave an explanation of what he believed to be its cause, and it was practically the same explanation as was given in the speech delivered last session by the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack. The explanation was that you really cannot help being to a certain extent sorry for these people. They are holders of small, poor, uneconomic holdings on the hillsides; they see the rich grazing land alongside of them and you really cannot, although you do not approve of their action, help sympathising with them in their anxiety to get possession of the rich lands within their sight.

I was very much struck with that explanation. I have been in Ireland during the whole of the recess, and have visited very nearly every county in Ireland. I have conferred with many people and have had an opportunity of making inquiries for myself. The noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack has not been so occupied. He has been a great deal better occupied, and I hope he will allow me to say, with all sincerity, that I wish him every happiness. I know that the way in which the noble and learned Lord has been occupied is not the best way to collect political information, and therefore he will allow me perhaps to give him my experience. I have come to the conclusion that, in the vast majority of cases, cattle-driving is not being carried on by the poor man who wants to get hold of the rich land, but that it has been carried on by the rich man who wants to get hold of more land; and in one part of the country, where I made careful inquiries, I was particularly struck by the fact, that, as a rule, the cattle-drivers are the sons of rich farmers, who, seeing that they have rich, but at the same time, healthy fathers, and that there is not an immediate prospect of their getting posession of any land—and I think if I were in their place, and knew that I was certain not to be punished, I might be tempted to go out myself—are naturally out to see if there is any good to be got out of this disturbance. I admit that there are cases in which the poor man is tempted, but in the majority of cases cattle-driving is the act not of the starving but of the greeedy. These greedy people are the people at the back of this crusade, whose followers have adopted as their motto the new beatitude: "Blessed are the cattle drivers, for they shall possess the land."

In another place attempts have been made to minimise the present state of Ireland. We are told that the country is crimeless. Apart from agrarian crime—and I mean to cover a very large class by agrarian crime—I think that that statement is true. The Irish are not by nature a criminally disposed people. At the same time one cannot help thinking that there may be less criminality because people may not think it worth while to prosecute. When you have to deal with juries who will not convict, and with active partisans packing the magisterial benches, you naturally think twice before dragging people into Court. I do not live in a disturbed district, but I can quote a case which happened the other day not far from me, and which caused considerable local interest owing to certain disputes that have taken place in the locality. It was a poaching case, and it is a very curious thing that three or four magistrates from far distant parts of the country found it convenient to come along that day and sit and hear that particular case. Now, why did they come? They can only have come because they had made up their minds beforehand and were determined to see that the case went in a certain direction. That is not an isolated case, and it is most unfortunate that such a state of affairs should exist. It is most unfortunate that magistrates should consider it consistent with their duty that they should behave in this way, but that may explain why people are not so keen in going before tribunals.

So much for ordinary crime. I do not think, after the speeches that have been delivered, it will be denied that there is a very considerable amount of agrarian crime apart from cattle-driving. I was going to say that the Ormond Hunt had been stopped, but I suppose it is not a crime to stop a hunt, though it is an unfortunate thing for the locality. I have in my hand particulars of a number of cases taken from the public Press. On 28th November, on the Brown-Ardskea estate in Galway, the mane and tail of a horse belonging to the landlord's bailiff were cut off. That is taken from the *Dublin Daily Express*. On 30th November, in Galway, two shots were fired from a thicket at a woman as she was leaving Craughwell railway station. That is from the *Irish Times*. Then on 2nd December, in County Meath, extensive cattle and hay sheds and stables, the property of a Mr. Dove, were burnt to the ground; 200 tons of hay were destroyed, thirteen fat cattle roasted to death, and a valuable thoroughbred foal injured, the damage being estimated at £4,000. This is said to have been undoubtedly an act of incendiarism, as on the previous morning a bottle of explosive fluid was found near one hay-shed and the hay had evidently been fired in several places. These particulars are taken from the *Northern Whig*. Two days later the cattle were driven off the lands of Ragaculla, Milltown, and turned out on the roads with placards on their horns, inscribed: "The land for the people; the road for me," and "Blessed are the cattle-drivers, for they shall possess the land." That is taken from the *Belfast News Letter*. On 7th December, the tenants of the Pollex estate, according to the *Roscommon Messenger*, unanimously refused to pay rent until the estate is handed over to the Estates Commissioners.

I will not trouble your Lordships by quoting more of these cases, but they clearly show the disturbed state of the country, and I think the irony of the situation is apparent when we see it stated, in the *West Meath Nationalist*, that the Clooneyquinn ranches have been placed under police protection, the owner being president of the local branch of the United Irish League. I have here a return which we have prepared ourselves from the public Press and which shows that in the five days, from 3rd January to 8th January, compensation was awarded in fourteen cases by quarter sessions for malicious injury. Lastly, I was anxious to quote the figures, that have already been given to the House by the noble Marquess behind me, as to the number of trials that have taken place in agrarian cases, in only eight of which convictions have been obtained. These figures are, I think, eloquent of the state of the country.

I notice that last night Mr. Redmond stated that in no case had cattle been maimed or ill-treated. I think the cases I have quoted are an answer to him. I wish Mr. Redmond would make further inquiries into the matter, for he would then, I think, realise that there have during the last autumn been cases of maiming and ill-treatment in connection with these drives. I wish Mr. Redmond had given more attention to this question, for I believe that strong words from him at the beginning of this movement would have had considerable effect in checking it. Cattle-driving having commenced, how did His Majesty's Government deal with it? At first they denied its existence. We all remember that. Then when they had to acknowledge its existence, they minimised it. Next came the utterance of Lord Denman. That statement was most unfortunate in its results. It has been quoted throughout the length and breadth of the land in justification of cattle-driving, and it was, as far as I know, never repudiated until last night, when Mr. Asquith stated that he thought cattle-driving was not only a criminal but a stupid act.

THE EARL OF CREWE: I said the same thing certainly five times.

*THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE: In this House?

THE EARL OF CREWE: Yes, in the same debate.

*THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE: I am extremely glad to hear it, but that is not my recollection. My recollection is that the noble Earl declared that cattle-driving was not so bad as cattle-maiming, and that that was all we could get out of the noble Earl. However, it was not recognised that the statement of Lord Denman had been in any way withdrawn. The nearest thing I can remember to it was that on 14th December the Chief Secretary told a deputation which waited upon him that he was not necessarily responsible for everything that a badgered Minister said. I do not remember that the noble Lord was particularly badgered at the time he made that statement, but, of course, I accept Mr. Birrell's explanation of it. I am very sorry the noble Lord felt badgered. It was all our fault. The big boys bullied the little boy, and he blurted it out. I wish that statement had not been allowed to remain unexplained, as everybody in Ireland thinks it was unexplained, for eight months. I should be glad to hear if the noble Lord still thinks that cattle-driving is not a very serious crime. I hope he is going to take part in the debate. I should like to hear his views of the situation at present. Rumours have reached us that the noble Lord is no longer going to join in our Irish debates. We hear, in fact, that he is going—shall I say?—to sever his connection with the Irish Office for the benefit of that Department. I hope not. I think it is a pity that he should run away just as there is a prospect of his reaping the whirlwind that I can assure him he did a great deal to sow.

Having done nothing to check cattle-driving, the Government then made it abundantly clear that they did not intend to prosecute the people who were really responsible for it. The Attorney-General characterised the question as to whether the ringleaders should be prosecuted as a political one. It is a political question if the prosecution of politicians is a political question, but not otherwise. I cannot help thinking that those politicians would have been prosecuted last year had not His Majesty's Government been afraid of their criticism when they came back to Parliament.

I pass to another point. I want to draw your Lordships' attention very briefly to something that the Executive in Ireland did—and for which, of course, the Chief Secretary is responsible—at the beginning of the recess. Mr. Birrell spent the first month of the recess abroad, and the events to which I am going to refer happened while he was away, but I am sure he will not repudiate responsibility for them. The Executive usually gives aggrieved persons all possible assistance in the detection of crime, and it is only under Mr. Birrell's *regime* that there has been a change in this particular. I am referring to what is known as the Glenaheiry outrage, in connection with which we have been asked to believe that Lord Ashtown blew himself up. I am not, of course, going into the details of the case. It is still before the Courts, but I have a perfect right to criticise the action of the Executive in reference to this case, and the manner in which every possible obstacle has been put in Lord Ashtown's way in his endeavours to bring the guilty parties to justice. First of all, Lord Ashtown offered a reward of £100, and your Lordships would think that there would have been no objection to the police circulating his offer, but an absolute refusal was given to his request. Inspector Preston, who was in charge of that district, was away in the north at the time of the explosion, but he returned three days afterwards and wrote a report. I do not wish to criticise the details of that report, or how—to use the phrase of the judge who tried the case—it was "manufactured." Suffice it to say that it is obvious to anyone who reads the evidence that everything the inspector knew in favour of Lord Ashtown was suppressed, and all he knew that could possibly tell against Lord Ashtown was given a prominent place.

An explanation is required as to how that report got into the Press about a fortnight before the case came on. It could only have been so published with the object of prejudicing the course of justice. Can it be wondered that an inquiry has been asked for? Mr. Redmond asked for a sworn inquiry into the whole case, and received a polite refusal. Lord Ashtown asked for an inquiry of a similar character and received no answer to his letter until he wrote a second time. It is not difficult to understand why a sworn inquiry has been refused as to how that report came to be written, and the circumstances in connection with the typewriting of it in Dublin Castle. Impartial inquiry is the last thing that these proceedings could stand. On his return from abroad, how did Mr. Birrell set to work, in the months of October and November, to restore order? First, he took no notice whatever publicly of what was going on, and then he made speeches deprecating, to a certain extent, cattle-driving. He made those speeches at Southampton, Belfast, and recently at Reading. He never went near the disaffected districts; he never brought his influence to bear on the cattle drivers himself; he kept in extreme parts of the country whenever he said anything about cattle-driving, and, needless to say, his oratory had no results whatever.

I want, in passing, to refer to one paragraph in the Reading speech. Mr. Birrell has always complained that he gets no assistance from anybody. "The landlords," he says, "do not flock to my assistance." He repeated this complaint at Reading within a couple of weeks of his receiving a deputation in Dublin Castle from the Irish Landowner's Convention. That deputation numbered twenty-five, including some Members of your Lordship's House, and it would have been three times that number had not Mr. Birrell requested that it should be limited to twenty-five. Mr. Birrell told the deputation that he was genuinely glad to see them; yet his comment within a few days is—

> "The landlords do not flock to my assistance."

He said further—

> "He stood in Ireland an isolated and somewhat solitary figure. When the Tories sent a Chief Secretary to Ireland all the landlords flocked around him regarding him as a person who would look after their interests, and who might perhaps be worth two or three years purchase on every one of their estates."

The landlords in this case, I think, need no defence. There is absolutely no possible practicable way in which we could improve the price we obtain by being civil to a Chief Secretary. But the suggestion that men like the present Leader of the Opposition in another place, or Mr. Walter Long, could be influenced by civility to do anything, in a transaction in which public money was used, to get their friends a better price is a gross libel on the characters of those right hon. Gentlemen. So much for Mr. Birrell's oratorical efforts to restore law and order in Ireland.

What has been done in the courts? His Majesty's Government, as has been stated, have obtained eight convictions. It is true that Mr. Ginnell has been sent to gaol. I am sorry for him personally, though I think he probably would admit that he earned what he got. Mr. Ginnell has been sent to gaol, though not in any way at the instance of His Majesty's Government. We are told—we have no evidence of it yet—that there has been a lull in cattle-driving. I suggest that one reason for that lull, if it exists, may be that Mr. Ginnell is temporarily deprived of his old activities. If so, that is a complete justification for our having urged the Government to prosecute. It is a most complete refutation of Mr. Birrell's statement at Belfast that he could not prosecute him for fear of encouraging him. You do not encourage a man much when you shut him up for six months. Of course, the Government could get convictions if they desired; the Crimes Act is there for the purpose, and the guilt of the parties is notorious.

And when members of the Government plead that the tradition of their Party forbids the use of the Crimes Act, I would remind him of the speech of the Prime Minister at Stirling on October 17th, 1885, shortly after he had been Chief Secretary:—

> "In many parts of Ireland for offences of an agrarian character they could not trust to the ordinary class of jurymen doing their duty, partly from prejudice, but mainly owing to the cruel and overpowering system of terror under the National League. They could not be sure with the clearest evidence of being able to get a verdict. He maintained that, in order to uphold the arm of justice in Ireland, it was not merely reasonable, but necessary, to provide some measures which would overcome that difficulty, and which might very well be made part of the permanent law."

The position is now certainly no better than it was in 1885, and what the present Prime Minister thought necessary and reasonable in 1885 is surely not unreasonable now. We have one thing to be thankful for. We have got at last Mr. Birrell's authorative explanation of the cause of cattle-driving—it is all the fault of your Lordships' House. In his speech at Bristol last Tuesday Mr. Birrell said:—

> "The House of Lords say to me, 'Coward, scoundrel, why don't you enforce the law?' and I say in reply, 'Why don't you pass our measures?'"

He refers to measures he has submitted to your Lordships' House, and which he claims have been mutilated by your Lordships. Hence, he maintains, Ireland is disturbed. I have no doubt that placards are already being prepared in the Liberal Publication Department showing your Lordships, who are always depicted on these occasions wearing your coronets, starting out on a wet Sunday afternoon prepared to encourage the cattle to wander through the length and breadth of Ireland. That caricature would not be more grotesque than certain other placards that were issued from the same place a little while ago on another subject. Your Lordships are responsible, of course, for the speeches made by Lord Denman and Mr. T. W. Russell, which, by their carelessness, encouraged cattle-driving in Ireland. Your Lordships are responsible for the delay in prosecuting the leaders of the movement, and for the fact that only one has been prosecuted up to the present time. Your Lordships are responsible for the Attorney-General's failure to obtain convictions, and for the fact that juries refused to convict. Your Lordships are responsible for the whole movement. Yet cattle-driving was rampant in Ireland before Mr. Birrell submitted a single Bill to your Lordships! I desire utterly to repudiate the suggestion, which would be laughed out of court in Ireland. In Ireland the cause of cattle-driving is known just as well as it is in your Lordships' House, and if only His Majesty's Government had dealt with it firmly and fearlessly from the beginning, instead of playing with it as they did, I believe they would have earned the gratitude of a large number of my fellow countrymen of all classes, for I am certain that cattle-driving and the present disorder are unpopular in the minds of everyone, except the agitators who are immediately responsible for it.

Lord CASTLETOWN: My Lords, I would like, if I might be allowed, to present another aspect of the Irish question than that which has been given to your Lordships by the three noble Lords who have spoken this evening. In the first place, what strikes me as very remarkable is the habit of exaggeration which Ireland undoubtedly does inspire in some of her sons. The noble Marquess the Leader of the Opposition, after a short visit to his beautiful place in Kerry, thought fit to compare my country to Macedonia, and the noble Marquess who spoke first this evening said its state was worse than it had been during the past thirty or forty years. I have known Ireland for a long time, and have lived year in and year out in the heart of that country. I went through the whole of what are called in Ireland the bad times, and I can say fairly and squarely that the present slight ebullitions are child's play to what happened in those days. In those days men's lives were in great danger. Mine was in danger for nearly a year, and there were six murders within a few miles of my own home. The noble Marquess said this evening that the police had received instructions not to come in contact with the people. I live in a district close to, if not absolutely in, some of the cattle-driving areas, and I have been told that there have been some very sharp knocks between the police and the people. Then the noble Marquess asked who is responsible for the demoralisation which he says has set in. I do not wish to speak of the Land Commissioners, who have done their best; but it is the Executive and the Ministers who have failed to carry out as rapidly as they might the Land Act of 1903 who are responsible to a great extent for any demoralisation there may be at the present time.

The noble Marquess next referred to the fact that there were nine or ten counties in a seriously disturbed state. If there are only nine or ten disturbed counties now in Ireland, there are at least twenty-two peaceful counties. Ireland is more prosperous, and, in a great number of places, more peaceful now—especially in the large tillage districts, and in those districts where sales from the landlords to the tenants have taken place—than it has been for the past thirty or forty years. Then the noble Marquess declared that the ordinary law was not available to deal with disturbance; yet in the same breath he said that compensation for malicious injuries to a very large extent was being ordered to be paid by the ratepayers. That shows that the ordinary law is able to deal with the matter. No one recognises more than I do the sadness of the fact that in Ireland juries often will not convict though the evidence is clear; but the Government are not responsible for the weakness and supineness of juries. The position is one not demanding coercion, not demanding the Crimes Act, but demanding a sustained, sensible, and common-sense line of policy. If Mr. Wyndham's Land Act of 1903, which was framed after a great conference between the representatives of the landlords and the Nationalist Members, had been administered rapidly and in the way Mr. Wyndham intended in his interesting and able speeches, the present difficulties would never have arisen. In those parts of Ireland where the Act has been worked properly, there is practically no crime.

Why has cattle-driving arisen? What is the origin of it? Because the people see large areas of grass lands, which Mr. Wyndham intended should be handed over to the Commissioners and sold to the people to enlarge their small holdings, being sold to the graziers. The last chance of the people being able to enlarge their holdings and make them pay is therefore disappearing, and there is nothing left to them but poverty or emigration. Having lived among the Western people, I know how tenaciously they cling to their old homes, and how rooted has been the desire, since it was made possible by Mr. Wyndham's Act, that their farms should be enlarged so that they might be able to remain in their own country. If a separate Commission had been appointed to deal with those congested areas the agitation which is now going on would never have arisen.

It is the old, old story in Ireland of postponing the right thing, letting the unrest grow, and then applying coercion. The Government, in my opinion, have taken a much wiser course. They have appointed a Commission—I am afraid they were a little slow in making the appointment—which I hope will report very shortly. The Government are awaiting that Report, and they propose to act upon it. I hope they will do so rapidly. I have seen some of the cattle-drivers and know what they think. These men are now saying that they will wait because there is a possibility that the Government will carry a Bill which will enable untenanted land to be divided up to enlarge the other holdings. I have had talks with a great number of labourers, farmers, and shopkeepers, and the attitude of many of them towards cattle-driving is changing. At first the labourers told me cattle-driving was a very fine thing, but now, when it is pointed out that if they get rid of the graziers the farmers will not be able to sell their store cattle, they admit that that is right, and say they are no longer in favour of cattle-driving. At fairs I have seen farmers begging the graziers to buy their cattle, upon the sale of which they absolutely depend for the payment of their rent; but the graziers stoutly refuse, pointing out that it is no use buying cattle which will be driven off.

In my opinion it is absurd making a great outcry about this question, because many cases of cattle driving arise purely out of personal spite, which no Crimes Act could defeat. I know of a case of a Protestant farmer who was told that his cattle were to be driven. He told me that the people came down from the neighbouring village and went to the public house, where the whole thing had been arranged. They got so drunk that they were unable to proceed with the cattle-driving, and eventually retreated after a scuffle. Many of these cases are settled by the men themselves. One man who was boycotted, instead of appealing for police protection, called in a large number of his friends, there was a fair fight between the two sides, and the whole question was settled without any further trouble.

THE EARL OF MAYO: Is that the noble Lord's idea of "law and order?"

LORD CASTLETOWN: It is certainly my idea of settling a question of that kind. In another case near my own home trouble arose because the agent, instead of selling to the evicted tenants, very ill advisedly let the lands for long terms to men who did not belong to the district. The result was that the whole of that particular district was in a turmoil. Cattle-driving has been indulged in, and the reason given—to my mind a fair one—is that the agent by his action has deprived these men of any chance of getting back the land which they occupied previously, and to which it was intended they should be restored by the Act to which your Lordships gave your assent. I think it would be much better if, instead of initiating these debates, which, to my mind are fruitless, noble Lords on the other side of the House would join hands with noble Lords on this side and assist in getting the Land Act of 1903 carried out in the way Mr. Wyndham intended. That Act should be carried out rapidly and vigorously.

When the time comes for His Majesty's Government to deal with the Report of the Commission presided over by Lord Dudley I would ask them to entrust that work to a separate Commission, and not to the overworked and under-manned Land Commission, who are absolutely incapable of dealing with a large problem of this nature. Before I sit down I wish to refer to an erroneous statement made by Lord Donoughmore. Referring to the explosion at Glenaheiry Lodge the noble Earl mentioned that the report of the police inspector was issued before the trial came on. I put a question on that point myself to one of the authorities, and I was informed that that is the invariable practice where an assessment has to be made by the county council. The inspector has to furnish a report to them, and to the person who claims, before the case can be gone on with. The noble Earl is therefore in error in thinking that this is not the regular practice.

LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE: My Lords, I shall only trouble your Lordships for a few minutes, for many of the arguments I should like to submit have been ably urged by other speakers. I am glad that the question of Ireland has been brought forward at once, not because I believe any speeches, however eloquent, or any arguments, however cogent, will force upon the minds of His Majesty's Government the responsibility which is theirs for the present state of that country, but because I think it is very desirable that the question should be raised and brought before Parliament at the earliest possible moment, and that we should do our best to elicit from His Majesty's Government the principle on which they work the administration of Ireland.

I must confess that to many of us who live in Ireland it seems that the country is administered by the Chief Secretary, not as he finds the law stated in the Statute-Book, but as he would wish it to be in some far-off Utopia of his own, where landowners and graziers are unknown, and where the principal duty of a Chief Secretary is to smile encouragingly on the national sport of "the finest peasantry in the world"—the midnight chase of oxen and sheep. I do not think His Majesty's Government feel their full responsibllity for the present state of Ireland, but there is one point on which the Chief Secretary has assumed full responsibility. Mr. Birrell admits that by no action of his has any law-breaker or instigator to law-breaking been turned from an agitator into what he calls a martyr by being punished for his wrong doing. Other martyrs there have been in numbers—martyrs of intimidation, martyrs of boycotting, martyrs who have been forced to give up their means of livelihood as graziers; but these do not appeal, apparently, to the right hon. Gentleman. They are all law-abiding citizens, and, in addition to that, some of them have, perhaps, the discredit of possessing pro-English tendencies.

The Chief Secretary has often complained that those who are attacked do not defend themselves properly. The ordinary course in which one man would defend himself against 500 would be by the use of firearms, but that is not what he means. He says they ought to assist the police in the identification of the ring-leaders of these midnight raids. But how can the poor herd be expected to give evidence against the leader of the midnight raid, when that leader is the president of the local branch of the United Irish League, and the United Irish League virtually means the Government of Ireland? What I consider to be the most lamentable result of these cattle-drives is the lowering of the sense of right and wrong in the people, and the increase of malice and all uncharitableness. It is surprising, when we think how the people recognise the supineness of the Government, and how they listen Sunday after Sunday to inflammatory speeches, that there are so many parts of Ireland in which peace reigns. All honour to those who decline to be influenced by the agitators. I can testify fully to the good behaviour of the people in the eastern portion of Mayo, amongst whom I live, who, in spite of all temptations, have not yielded, or have yielded only to a very small extent, to the temptation to indulge in cattle-driving.

We are told in the gracious Speech that a measure is to be introduced to obtain the compulsory possession of grazing lands for the purpose of relieving congestion. I am sure many noble Lords hardly realise what that means, and I should like to transfer the scene of London. Imagine what would be said if His Majesty's Government were to announce that they proposed to purchase Curzon Street, Chesterfield Gardens, and Great Stanhope Street for the purpose of relieving the congestion of Shepherd Market, and that they would not give a fair value, but only such a price as the tenants of Shepherd Market would be willing to give, and from that would subtract 15 per cent. to represent a guarantee for the repayment of the money.

What are these grass lands? They are lands which have been brought to the highest pitch of perfection by the landlords, and which the neighbouring tenants covet because they see their own land in a state of deterioration brought about by their own bad farming. On the grass lands the improvements are all made by the landlords, and all taxes are paid by them. The landlords would have no objection to relinquish these lands voluntarily if they were really needed for reasons of State, provided they got a fair price, which invested at 3¾ per cent. would enable them to obtain the net income they have been getting from the land during the past ten years. But the Estate Commissioners will not give any such price, because they know that these lands would rapidly deteriorate in the hands of the new owners.

The Irish landlords have been called the English Garrison. For hundreds of years they have fought the battle of England through good and evil report. They are now old and politically powerless. His Majesty's Government propose to deprive them of the greater part of their possessions to make way for the younger democracy. We know His Majesty's Government are full of great schemes of social reform, and, if I might venture to submit something to their consideration, it would be that when this Bill is introduced for dispossessing these old and valued servants of this country, they will consider whether the old-age pensions they afford them should not be of a generous nature.

*LORD LANGFORD: My Lords, as one who has never before addressed this House, I would ask for the kind consideration of your Lordships for the few words I have to say on this subject. I should not have intervened at all but for the fact that I live in the rural district of Trim, County Meath, where Mr. Ginnell started his campaign, and I wish to state to your Lordships my personal experience of cattle-driving.

On 14th September last I attended a meeting of the rural district council of Trim, and at the end of that meeting Mr. Ginnell was introduced. I found myself in a small minority on that occasion, and I objected to his coming there and using the district council room for a wrong purpose. My objection was over-ruled, and I remained and listened to his speech. I can truly say that the speech he made then was of a much milder type than subsequent speeches. I took exception to his remarks at the time, and pointed out that they contained matter which could only bear one interpretation. I was, however, not listened to very favourably. I was asked to support a resolution to be sent to the Estates Commissioners asking for compulsory powers to acquire lands in the immediate district. I pointed out that the Estates Commissioners had, by the Evicted Tenant's Act lately passed by Parliament, large compulsory powers given to them, and that no such resolution as that which had been prepared by Mr. Ginnell was required. I then left in as dignified a way as I could.

We all know what the results of this preaching has been. It has resulted in fourteen cattle drives in my own district. We were told at first that cattle-driving was only to take place on land held under eleven months agreements; but on the night of 4th November three cattle-drives took place outside my own gate, one off a farm held under a lease from myself, the second off a farm held under an eleven months agreement, and the third off a farm which had been purchased by the tenant; and in one case — a claim for malicious injury — which is *sub judice*, the amount claimed for damages is nearly £3,000. Whatever amount is awarded in that case will have to be levied on the ratepayers. I leave it to your Lordships to consider what a state of demoralisation must be produced in a small area where there have been fourteen cattle-drives. The number of cattle removed was 433, and the number of sheep 294; the number of arrests, however, was only four, and the number of convictions two.

I was one of those who attended with the deputation which waited upon Mr. Birrell. The right hon. Gentleman expressed his great pleasure at seeing us, but found fault with us on three grounds. He first blamed the magistrates, but I think my noble friend, Lord Clonbrock, has already referred to that matter and shown that the magistrates were not to be blamed. Secondly, he complained that those who are in possession of these grass lands did not defend themselves. The Chief Secretary, however, omitted to tell us what means of defence we have. I pointed out to Mr. Birrell that after one of the cattle-drives I asked one of the herds why they did not try and prevent what was going on. The answer was, "It would be as much as my life would be worth." And, of course, to imagine that a couple of herds can stand up before an excited mob of young men armed, as they were on one occasion, with great ash poles, at the top of one of which was stuck a shoemaker's awl, and an iron bar, is expecting of human nature more than human nature can do. I know another case where cattle were driven off and the herd dared not come in conflict with the mob. I have seen, in the expressions on the faces of the young men who have attended them, the effect of the meetings that have been held. They are filled with a desire to deal with this matter in a summary way, and it has been our experience that this is what generally happens when these agitators come down to the district.

If there is any body of men we admire in Ireland it is the Royal Irish Constabulary. But they have had to stand and listen to this crusade, to these illegal speeches, leading to illegal acts, while the leaders of the movement are allowed to go free, and the police are told to look out for the cattle-drives themselves. It is monstrous. The police are put on the wrong track, and the result we see in the figures I have quoted. Lord Castletown has left the House, otherwise I should like to have said a word to him on the question of law and order. We do not want to see rough-and-tumble fights such as he described. We have had enough of them in Ireland. We do not want the Government to shelter themselves behind professions of sympathy. We want to see law re-established, the police supported, and the owners given a fair chance, free of the fear of intimidation. Are we to be told that these lands are to be driven down to a very low value to satisfy the cupidity of the people in the immediate district? I fail to see, if these lands are broken up, how the fat cattle can be reared, to keep up that great industry which is one of the greatest assets of Ireland. I believe it has been an act of absolute madness on the part of the cattle-drivers trying to ruin that great industry, which has taken years and years to build up. I do not think that if these sales were to take place the land would be used for tillage. You would find that the men who took possession would turn round and let the land again for exactly the same purpose.

*Earl BEAUCHAMP: My Lords, I am sure your Lordships would wish my first words to be those of congratulation to the noble Lord who has just sat down, and who has broken a silence of twenty-four years by the excellent maiden speech to which we have just listened. With regard to the course of this debate I think noble Lords opposite have been successful in adopting what I suppose one may call the official attitude of pessimism, which it is the duty of the Opposition to take in a debate of this kind. They have looked upon the state of Ireland, and found it almost altogether bad, and they have turned their blind eye to those more satisfactory features, which, I think, an unprejudiced person cannot fail to observe when he turns his vision to that country. They have put the magnifying end of the telescope to those disorders which have already been condemned by representatives of His Majesty's Government in this House, and they have applied the other end of the telescope to those more satisfactory features, and have almost entirely neglected to refer to them. For my own part, I should prefer to appeal to those more clear-sighted people, who, suffering from no defect of sight at all, are able to give a more impartial consideration to the facts which are before the House. I think I am justified in saying that noble Lords opposite have taken a pessimistic view of the present state of Ireland by reference to the phrase, which was used by the noble Lord who has just sat down and by the Marquis of Lansdowne yesterday, "the ruining of the grazing industry." So far as the police are aware, there has been nothing in the agitation against the present system during the past year which has been followed by any considerable increase in the number of grazing farms unlet. And it so happens that just now the banks in Ireland are holding their meetings, and most of them are talking of good business, while the prices of cattle are well maintained at the present time. There is no particular increase, if any at all, in the number of failures or bankruptcies, and, therefore, it is difficult to see how it is possible to defend such a phrase as "the ruining of the grazing industry" at the present moment.

LORD LANGFORD: I apologise for interrupting the noble Earl, but I do not think I used that phrase.

*EARL BEAUCHAMP: The noble Lord used the phrase "ruin that great industry;" and in his speech yesterday the noble Marquess the Leader of the Opposition said—

> "These people are content to ruin what is the most important of Irish industries."

The noble Marquess seemed to take a particularly gloomy view of the present condition of affairs. He admitted that there was a lull in cattle-driving, but that circumstance did not afford him any satisfaction at all, but seemed to be one of evil augury. There was one other phrase in the speech of the noble Marquess the Leader of the Opposition yesterday to which I think it is only right that exception should be taken once more. That was the reference to Macedonia. The noble Marquess has himself done so much for that unhappy country that it seems to me particularly unfortunate that he should have provided other people with a possible reply to any representation which may be made in the future from this country, and I am sure the noble Marquess would be one of the very first to regret if anything he said in the course of the debate yesterday should seem to assume that there was any very real analogy between the two countries. Lord Donoughmore seemed to hear with surprise that my noble friend the Lord President of the Council had at any moment spoken of cattle-driving in terms of disapprobation. I do not understand why that is, unless it is due to the fact that, according to a growing custom in this House, noble Lords leave the House after they have made their speeches, and do not listen to the comments made on them by noble Lords on the opposite side. I have turned up, in *Hansard*, the speech on the state of Ireland, which my noble friend the Lord President made in this House on 5th June, and I find that he spoke of—

> "This exhibition of disorderly conduct which we deplore quite as much as noble Lords opposite."

*THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE: What I complained of was not that the Lord President did not disapprove of cattle-driving, but that he did not disapprove of what Lord Denman said.

*EARL BEAUCHAMP: I do not think the noble Earl will find there are many on this side of the House who will disapprove of anything that Lord Denman said, because the Lord President pointed out, on the same occasion, that Lord Denman had no intention of minimising such criminal and disorderly acts. I am quite sure that, even supposing, which I am far from believing to be the case, that any phrase that Lord Denman used has had an evil effect in Ireland, it is chiefly due to the fact that that phrase was very largely advertised by noble Lords opposite, and used by them for partisan purposes in order to stir up an agitation both in Ireland and in this country. There is something to be said in opposition to the view that the state of Ireland is so very disorderly at the present moment. The Lord President, in the debate of last year, quoted figures in which he compared the 1,000 agrarian outrages in 1886 with the 234 in 1906, and with the recollection of those figures, as well as other figures which are at my disposal, I heard with considerable astonishment the noble Marquess say that the state of Ireland at this moment is worse than it was in 1881, 1882, 1886, or 1887. Surely I may point out to the noble Marquess that, although this cattle-driving does exist, at any rate it is not accompanied by crime and outrage, and that there is exceedingly little maiming of cattle that are driven.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: I especially pointed out that there was no crime required, owing to the intimidation of the League achieving all that was necessary. There is considerable demoralisation, and I consider the state of things quite as serious.

*EARL BEAUCHAMP: All I was trying to point out was that there was neither crime nor outrage, and therefore, I think, it is exceedingly difficult to support the proposition of the noble Marquess. The "demoralisation which exists all over the country," is, I think, also a somewhat exaggerated phrase on the part of the noble Marquess. He even said that the judges were demoralised. I seem to remember reading a report a few days ago of a discussion in one of the Courts of Justice in Dublin, and it did not seem to me that the Lord Chief Justice, at any rate, showed any signs of demoralisation in the way he conducted his argument with the Attorney-General. Let me remind the noble Marquess that in 1881 there were no less than 4,439 agrarian crimes as compared with 234 in 1906. The more serious cases of agrarian crime, such as those requiring special police protection and the serious cases of boycotting, also showed a considerable diminution, and I think that when the full figures, so far as they can be supplied, are produced, they will go far to satisfy the noble Marquess as to the present condition of Ireland.

I should also like to point out that the condition of Ireland now is no worse than it was at certain periods under the administration of Mr. Gerald Balfour. But at that time His Majesty's Government did not think it necessary to revive the Crimes Act, and surely His Majesty's present Government, in following an example of that kind, cannot be doing such a very serious thing!

LORD ASHBOURNE: Some parts of the Crimes Act were in operation at that time.

Earl Beauchamp.

*EARL BEAUCHAMP: It is no use applying a remedy which will not fit the disease from which the country is suffering. The Crimes Act, if it were applied in these particular circumstances, would not assist in the detection or punishment of these crimes.

LORD ASHBOURNE: I differ entirely.

*EARL BEAUCHAMP: That may be the opinion of the noble and learned Lord. He will have every opportunity of stating his view subsequently in debate. But what has happened when the Government have undertaken prosecutions is that the evidence has been wanting. No number of Crimes Acts will supply evidence, and I am sure that no noble Lord would desire that a Crimes Act should supply evidence. Therefore, even supposing the Crimes Act were put into operation and cases of unlawful assembly were tried before two resident magistrates, there is no evidence to show that it would be easier or more possible to secure convictions in those cases than it is in cattle-driving. The Crimes Act, therefore, in the view of His Majesty's Government, would be ineffectual for the present purpose. Cattle-driving is almost the only direction in which there is any symptom or sign of an increase in agrarian crime. Firing at people and firing in the neighbourhood of a house both show no sign of increase, and, though there is some increase in Galway and Clare in cases of firing at houses, that is covered by the opinion of His Majesty's Government that they would not be able to stop that practice by reviving clauses of the Crimes Act. The graziers have not done much in support of His Majesty's Government in putting down the practice of cattle-driving. It may be asked why there are very few instances, if any, of the beasts being lost or being any the worse for the driving which has taken place. That is explained by the excellent work that has been done by the Royal Irish Constabulary. In almost every case they have been able to track the cattle and restore them to their owners. The noble Marquess who initiated the debate tried to prove that the Government had taken no steps to stop cattle-driving by saying that, while 237 people were prosecuted, 229 of them had been acquitted.

But surely the fact that so many prosecutions have been instituted disproves the contention of the noble Marquess that the Government are disposed to allow the law-breakers to go unpunished. There was another inconsistency in the speeches of noble Lords opposite. Lord Donoughmore said that cattle-driving was chiefly done by rich men, the sons of rich farmers, and the noble Lord further declared that if he were in their case he would have done it himself.

*THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE: I should have been tempted.

*EARL BEAUCHAMP: If noble Lords on this side were anxious to encourage cattle-driving they would make as much party capital out of that admission as noble Lords opposite have tried to make out of the statement of my noble friend, Lord Denman, last session. On the other hand, the House was told by Lord Clonbrock that cattle-driving was done by poor dupes of boys who had no sense of responsibility.

LORD CLONBROCK: Lord Donoughmore and I were talking about different parts of the country.

*EARL BEAUCHAMP: Even if noble Lords live in different parts of Ireland, they should be expected to speak with a united voice on this subject.

LORD CLONBROCK: The circumstances are different in the different parts.

*EARL BEAUCHAMP: After all, cattle-driving prevails in a very limited area, and it is hardly possible that the causes which led to it should be different in different parts of that area. The noble Earl, Lord Donoughmore, told us that the Ormond Hunt had been stopped, and he was not sure whether noble Lords on this side of the House would look upon that as a crime. I can assure him that for my own part I do not look upon it as a crime, but as a blunder which, according to a well-known saying, is worse than a crime. There is one other inaccuracy in what the noble Earl said which I should like to correct. He quoted from the speech of Mr. Redmond in another place last night to the effect that no ill-treatment of animals had taken place. I fancy that a careful reading of the verbatim report of Mr. Redmond's speech would make that clear. What he said was that no ill-treatment took place during the actual cattle-driving. That, I think, is a point which it is worth while to make. The causes which have led to this cattle-driving had their origin in events which took place a very long time ago. Anyone who knows anything of Ireland is aware that in that country events work out more slowly than perhaps in any other part of the world. The real cause of all this was operating as long ago as the time of John Wesley, for in one of his diaries there is this interesting passage—

> "The gentry are continually driving away hundreds, yea, thousands, by throwing such quantities of arable land into pasture, which leaves them neither business nor food. Thus it is that man dispeoples many parts of Ireland."

His Majesty's Government are most anxious in this matter to carry out and, if necessary, to perfect, the work which was done by Mr. Wyndham under the Land Act of 1903. They have every hope that they will be able to accomplish that purpose; they believe it is rather by following out their present policy that they will be able to do it; and I do not think it is unreasonable on the part of His Majesty's Government to ask for the support of noble Lords opposite in carrying out a policy which was inaugurated with so much success by Mr. Wyndham. I ask your Lordships to take, not a prejudiced, but an impartial, broad view of the present condition of Ireland, and I cannot think that your Lordships will then believe it to be as bad as it has been painted by some noble Lords opposite this evening.

LORD DUNBOYNE: My Lords, I should not have intervened in this debate if it had not been for the remark made by both Lord Castletown and Lord Beauchamp, to the effect that there was no serious crime in Ireland. I think they can scarcely have made use of the ordinary channels of knowledge, or otherwise they would know that within the last fortnight there have been three shooting outrages in the county in which I reside. The first man happened to be a councillor who was driving to catch the train in order to attend the council and perform his duties to the county. He was suspected of going to vote for a man as returning officer who was not particularly favourable to certain persons in his district. At nine o'clock in the morning, as he was driving along the road, his car was stopped. Three men attacked him and pulled him off the car, one of the men firing a revolver, the bullet from which struck him just over the heart and he is now lying in a critical state. That, in the eyes of the Government, may not be a serious crime, but those who live in the district look upon it in a different light. On this day week, within six or seven miles of where I reside, a Mr. Patrick Ryan was shot at shortly after seven o'clock in the evening and seriously wounded in the face, and a few days before that a Mr. Patrick Macnamara had his house fired into. In face of these facts I do not see how it can be said that there is no serious crime in that part of Ireland. The fact is that His Majesty's Government no longer rule in those parts of the country. Nor, indeed, can it be said that the United Irish League completely rule, because I believe they have sent out word that these outrages are to cease. But these ruffians have got so in the way of enforcing their decrees that when the United Irish League do not agree with their views they act on their own and shoot right and left. The Government has tried to govern Ireland, not by enforcing the law, but through the gracious permission of the United Irish League. We have been told a great deal about the want of evidence. But the Judges and the Attorney-General for Ireland have stated in many cases where there has been an absolute acquittal, that the evidence was complete, and that the juries were really perjuring themselves in returning the verdicts they did. The Government has never yet attempted to prosecute one of the instigators of these crimes. The only leader who has been sent to gaol—Mr. Ginnell—was imprisoned for contempt of Court. The Government have allowed Nationalist Member after Member to state openly that this could continue, as His Majesty's Government were in sympathy with them. I hope the Government will hold out some hope that in the future they will do something to remedy the state of things in Ireland.

THE EARL OF LEITRIM: My Lords, I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Moved, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*The Earl of Leitrim.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed further to consider the suggestions which have from time to time been made for increasing the efficiency of the House of Lords in matters affecting legislation, and to report as to the desirability of adopting them either in their original or in some modified form." (The Lord Rosebery (*E. Rosebery*)); agreed to, and ordered accordingly. Then the following Lords were named of the Committee—

L. Archbishop of Canterbury.

D. Norfolk.
D. Bedford.
D. Devonshire.
D. Northumberland.

M. Lansdowne.

E. Jersey.
E. Lauderdale.
E. Onslow.
E. Cawdor.
E. Camperdown.
E. Lytton.
E. Halsbury.

V. Selby.
V. St. Aldwyn.

L. Clinton.
L. Brodrick (*Viscount Midleton*).
L. Ribblesdale.
L. Rosebery (*E. Rosebery*).
L. Belper.
L. Kenry (*E. Dunraven and Mount Earl*).
L. Newton.
L. Curzon of Kedleston.
L. Courtney of Penwith.
L. Collins.

The Committee to meet on Tuesday next at Three o'clock, and to appoint their own Chairman.

PUBLIC BILLS.

Moved, "That there be laid before the House a continuation of the Return relating to Public Bills (51) (laid before the House on 6th May last) up to the end of the session of 1907" (*The Earl of Camperdown*); agreed to, and ordered accordingly.

THE EARL OF ONSLOW.

Appointed *nemine dissentiente* to take the Chair in all Committees of this House for the session.

Committee for Privileges.—Appointed.

Committee for the Journals.—Appointed.

Stoppages in the Streets.—Order to prevent, renewed.

Appeal Committee.—Appointed.

ADJOURNMENT.

Moved, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*The Marquess of Ripon.*)

*THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE: My Lords, on the Motion for the adjournment I desire to make a personal explanation with regard to Lord Ashtown's case, in view of the contradiction of my previous statement by Lord Castletown. I have made careful inquiries and am informed that the facts are as follow:—There is a standing police regulation that in all cases of malicious injury the police are to furnish to the applicant and to the county council a statement of the matters appearing upon their investigation, but they are expressly instructed by the same regulation not to advance theories or make charges. In Lord Ashtown's case the report complying with this regulation, being the report of the police sergeant, who came upon the scene shortly after the explosion, was, in fact, furnished in accordance with the regulation to the parties; but Inspector Preston's report was an unprecedented publication and was so admitted by him in cross examination.

House adjourned at half-past Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 30th January, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, through indisposition, from this day's Sitting.

Whereupon Mr. EMMOTT, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS.

The Chairman of Ways and Means reported, That, in accordance with Standing Order 79, he had conferred with the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords, for the purpose of determining in which House of Parliament the respective Private Bills should be first considered, and they had determined that the Bills contained in the following List should originate in the House of Lords, viz.:—

Aire and Calder Navigation.

Alliance and other Assurance and Insurance Companies.

Ammanford Urban District Council Water.

Argentine North-Eastern Railway.

Audenshaw and Saddleworth Urban District Councils.

Barry Railway.

Bognor Gas Light and Coke Company.

Bristol Corporation.

Bristol Docks.

Bristol Tramways.

Briton Ferry Urban District Council.

Camberwell and other Metropolitan Borough Councils (Superannuation).

Cardiff Railway.

Commercial Union Assurance Company.

Croydon and Southern Districts Tramways.

Crystal Palace Company.

Fine Art and General Insurance Company.

Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours.

Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway.

Great Western Railway.

Great Western Railway (Superannuation Scheme).

Herne Bay Pier.

Highgate Hill Tramways.

Huddersfield Water.

Interoceanic Railway of Mexico.

Keighley Corporation.

King's College, London (Transfer).

Law Guarantee Trust and Accident, and United Legal Indemnity Insurance Societies.

Llanelly and Burry Port Water Board.

Llanelly Gas.

London and District Electricity Supply.

London and Windsor Motor Roads, Tramroads, and Tramways.

London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway.

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements).

London Electric Supply.

London Motor Roadways Approach.

London (Westminster and Kensington) Electric Supply Companies.

Magee Presbyterian College, Londonderry.

Malvern Hills.

Merthyr Tydfil Corporation.

Metropolitan District Railway.

Metropolitan Electric Tramways.

Monmouthshire County Council.

Northern Assurance Company.

Norwich Union Fire Insurance Society.

Pontypridd Water.

Ravensthorpe Urban District Council.

Rhymney and Aber Valleys Gas and Water.

Rhymney Railway.

Rochester Bridge.

St. Marylebone Borough Council (Superannuation).

Skegness Urban District Council.

South Wales Electrical Power Distribution.

Stratford-upon-Avon, Towcester, and Midland Junction, Evesham, Redditch, and Stratford-upon-Avon Junction, and East and West Junction Railways (Amalgamation).

Swansea Valley Gas.

Taff Vale Railway.

Thames River Steamboat Service Act (1904) Amendment.

Upton Town Hall.

Wath-upon-Dearne Urban District Council Gas.

West London, Barnes, and Richmond Tramways.

PETITIONS.

LICENSED PREMISES (EXCLUSION OF CHILDREN).

Petitions for legislation; From Accrington; Allerton; Amble; Ashington and Hirst; Aspatria; Barnsbury; Barry Dock; Basingstoke; Bath; Benwell; Bewcastle; Blundellsands; Blyth; Bow and Bromley; Brampton; Bristol (two); Broadstone; Burnley; Burton Lazars; Bury; Cadoxton; Camberwell; Cambridge and other places; Cheltenham; Coalville (two); Corbridge on Tyne; Crosby; Croydon; Darlington; Dunstable; East Islington (two); Ely; Gosforth; Harpurhey; Harrogate; Hassocks; Hayton; Heanor; Highgate; Hulme; Ipswich; Islington (two); King's Norton and Northfield; Kingston-on-Thames; Langley Mill; Leeds (two); Littlehampton; London (two); Long Clawson; Long Row; Melton Mowbray; Middleton; Mile End; Mundesley-on-Sea; Nelson; Newcastle upon-Tyne (three); Newton and Beadlan; Norwood; North London; Nottingham (two); Nunhead; Oldham; Oxford; Peckham and Nunhead; Penarth (two); Peterborough; Poole; Purley; Purton; Reading; Richmond (seven); Rotherham; Ruddington; Saffron Walden; Salford; Sawston; Scarborough; Seaton Delaval; Selby; Sheringham; Sittingbourne; South London; Southport; Stalybridge (four); Starbeck; Stepney; Stocksfield; Swannington; Tunbridge Wells; Waterhead and Denton; Waverley Park; West

Bridgford; West Hartlepool; Whitby; Willington Quay; and, Wootton Bassett; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING ACTS.

Petitions for alteration of Law; From Carrington; and, Oldham; to lie upon the Table.

MONASTIC AND CONVENTIONAL INSTITUTIONS.

Petition from Grantchester, for Government inspection; to lie upon the Table.

PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE.

Petition from Fleet, for extension to women; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAYS.

Petitions for legislation; From Burwell (three); Barnt Green; Barrington; Birmingham (three); Bourn; Cherryhinton; Childerley Gate; Chittering; Comberton; Crawley; Ely; Fowlmere and Triplow; Fulbourn; Great Shelford; Haddenham; Halesowen; Kingston (Cambs.); London; Northfield (two); Over (two); Reach; Royston; Rugeley; Shepreth; Southport; Steeple Morden; Tamworth; Toft; Tower Hamlets; Tunbridge Wells; Whitwick; and, Willingham; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EXPLOSIONS (WORSBORO' DALE.)

Copy presented, of Report to the Secretary of State for the Home Department on the circumstances attending an Explosion which occurred in the Press House at the factory of Messrs. Kynoch, Limited, at Worsboro' Dale, near Barnsley, in the county of Yorkshire, on the 12th December 1907, by Major A. Cooper-Key, His Majesty's Inspector of Explosives [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).

Copy presented, of Licence to be at large granted to Ada Wheeler, a convict under detention in Aylesbury Prison, permitting her to be at large on condition that she enter the East End Refuge, N. [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).

Copy presented, of a Licence to be at large granted to Elizabeth Davies, a convict under detention in Aylesbury Prison, permitting her to be at large on condition that she enter the Home of Compassion, 63, Sutherland Street, S.W. [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS (CONDITIONAL LICENCES).

Copies presented, of Licences to be at large granted to William Wood and Daniel Condron, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A of the Penal Servitude Act, 1864 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT, 1906, (REGULATIONS AS TO RETURNS FROM EMPLOYERS).

Copy presented, of Regulations dated 15th January 1908, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department under Section 12 of The Workmen's Compensation Act, 1906, as to Returns to be furnished each year by Employers in certain Industries, with respect to the compensation paid under the Act during the previous year [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACTS, (FRUIT PRESERVING).

Copy presented, of Order dated 11th September 1907, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in pursuance of Section 41 and 58 of The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, prescribing conditions to be observed in Factories and Workshops in which women or young persons are employed in the process of cleaning or preparing Fruit, in pursuance of the special exception allowed by Section 41 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACTS (PARTICULARS OF PIECE WORK WAGES), (BRASS).

Copy presented, of Order dated 23rd September 1907, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, applying the provisions of Section 116 of The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, with modifications to Factories and Workshops in which the mixing, casting, or manufacture of Brass or of articles of Brass is carried on [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SHOP HOURS ACT, 1904.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Council of the County of Lancaster, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the Hours of Closing for certain classes of Shops within the urban district of Ashton-in-Makerfield [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

POLLING DISTRICTS, (COUNTY OF SURREY).

Copy presented, of Order made by the County Council of the County of Surrey altering the boundary between the Windlesham and Bagshot Polling Districts [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

POLLING DISTRICTS, (COUNTY OF EAST SUFFOLK).

Copy presented, of Order made by the County Council of the County of East Suffolk altering certain Polling Districts in the Northern or Lowestoft Parliamentary Division of the County [by Act]; of lie upon the Table.

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY OF ESSEX).

Copy presented, of Order made by the County Council of the County of Essex altering certain Polling Districts in the Eastern or Maldon Parliamentary Division of the county [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY OF LANCASTER).

Copy presented, of Order made by the Council of the County of Lancaster re-dividing the Parliamentary Division of Gorton into convenient Polling Districts [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY OF SURREY).

Copy presented, of Order made by the County Council of the County of Surrey dividing the present Parliamentary Polling District of Farnham into three Polling Districts [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES (DISTRIBUTION OF GRANTS).

Copy presented, of Annual Report of the Distribution of Grants for Agricultural Education and Research in the year 1906–7, &c. [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Tables showing the extent in statute acres and the produce of the crops and numbers of live stock for the year 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CROWN JEWELS COMMISSION (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Report of the Vice-regal Commission appointed to investigate the circumstances of the loss of the Regalia of the Order of Saint Patrick and to inquire whether Sir Arthur Vicars exercised due vigilance and proper care as the custodian thereof [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PHARMACY (IRELAND) ACTS, 1875 TO 1890.

Copy presented, of Order in Council, dated 24th January 1908, approving of a regulation made by the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

PAWNBROKERS' RETURN (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Returns from the City Marshal of Dublin for the year ended 31st December 1906 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1887, (EVICTION NOTICES).

Copy presented, of Return of Eviction Notices filed during the quarter ended 31st December 1907 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION FOR IRELAND.

Copies presented, of Importation of Horses, Asses, and Mules (Ireland) Order, 1907, Nos. I. and II. [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

WINTER ASSIZES (IRELAND).

Copies presented, of four Orders in Council, dated 5th November 1907, for holding winter assizes in Ireland [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

GENERAL PRISONS (IRELAND) ACT, 1877, AND THE PRISONS (IRELAND) ACT, 1907.

Copy presented, of Order in Council approving of rules made by the General Prisons Board for the government of ordinary Prisons in Ireland [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SHOP HOURS ACT, 1904.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Urban District Council of Omagh and by the Council of the county borough of Londonderry, and confirmed by the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, fixing the Hours of Closing for certain classes of Shops [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Time Table of Examinations for the year 1908 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY (SPECIAL RESERVE).

Copy presented, of Form of Attestation to be used for enlisting Militiamen as Special Reservists under the Territorial and Reserve Forces Bill [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY (IMPERIAL YEOMANRY).

Copy presented, of Training Return of Imperial Yeomanry for 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY.

Copy presented, of (1) New Edition of Rules of Procedure for Courts Martial, containing (2) Rules for Field Punishments [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

TREATY SERIES (No. 3, 1908).

Copy presented, of Exchange of Notes between the United Kingdom and France. Arrangements under Article X., paragraph 4, of the Convention of 20th October 1906 respecting the New Hebrides. 29th August 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1908-9.

Estimates presented, for the year 1908–9, with Explanation of Differences [by Command]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 19.]

NAVY (STATEMENT EXPLANATORY OF ESTIMATES).

Copy presented, of Statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty explanatory of the Navy Estimates, 1908–9 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1884.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 14th January 1908, declaring that Sir R. Hay Drummond Hay, His Majesty's Consul-General, Beirut, formerly Clerk to the Mission, Tangier, was appointed without a Civil Service Certificate through inadvertence on the part of the Head of his Department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

ALDERNEY MAIL SERVICE.

Copy ordered, "of Contract, dated the 28th day of September, 1907, between the Postmaster-General and the Alderney Steam Packet Company, Limited, for the conveyance of Mails between Alderney and Guernsey, Alderney and Cherbourg, and any other places at which the Company's Mail-ships call; together with a Copy of the Treasury Minute thereon, dated the 6th day of December, 1907."—(*Mr. Runciman.*)

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (IRELAND).

Copy ordered, "of Account of Receipts and Payments of the Accountant-General of the Supreme Court of Judicature in in Ireland in respect of funds of suitors in the said Court, including therein funds to the credit of Lunacy Accounts in the year to the 30th day of September, 1907, together with a Statement of Liabilities and Assets and particulars of Securities in Court on the 30th day of September, 1907."—(*Mr. Runciman.*)

WEST INDIAN INTER-COLONIAL MAIL SERVICE.

Copy ordered, "of Contract, dated the 29th day of August, 1907, between the Crown Agents for the Colonies and the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company for the conveyance of Mails between certain Colonies in the West Indies, for a period of ten years; together with a copy of the Treasury Minute thereon, dated the 12th day of October, 1907."—(*Mr. Runciman.*)

CIVIL CONTINGENCIES FUND, 1906-7.

Copy ordered, "of Accounts of the Civil Contingencies Fund, 1906–7, showing (1) the receipts and payments in connection with the Fund in the year ended the 31st day of March, 1907; (2) the distribution of the capital of the Fund at the commencement and close of the year; together with Copy of the Correspondence with the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon."—(*Mr. Runciman.*)

TRADE AND NAVIGATION.

Return ordered, "of Accounts relating to Trade and Navigation of the United Kingdom for each month during the year 1908."—(*Mr. Lloyd-George.*)

PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES (ELECTORS, ETC.), (UNITED KINGDOM).

Address for, "Return showing, with regard to each Parliamentary Constituency in the United Kingdom, the total number and, as far as possible, the number in each class of Electors on the register now in force; and also showing the population and inhabited houses in each Constituency (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 22, of Session 1907)."—(*Sir Charles Dilke.*)

QUESTION AND ANSWER CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Cattle Maiming in County Birr.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh Mid.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether his attention has been called to the fact that, at Birr Quarter Sessions on the 3rd January, compensation was awarded in four cases for the maiming of a foal and a mare, and for the houghing of seven cattle, cutting away the tails of four, and slashing others; and whether any persons have been made criminally amenable for these outrages.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) It is the fact that at Birr Quarter Sessions, on 3rd January, 1908, compensation for malicious injury to animals was awarded in four cases, the injuries being of the nature described in the Question. The police have not succeeded in making any persons amenable for the offences.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Afghanistan.

LORD PERCY (Kensington S.) asked as to the lines demarcating British and Russian influence in Afghanistan.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): The line determining the zone within which Russia has bound herself not to seek concessions starts from the point on the Afghan Frontier which is nearest to Gazik. A map showing the lines demarcating the regions of British and Russian influence as agreed upon in the Convention is in course of preparation, and will be placed at the disposal of the Members as soon as possible.

THE BRUSSELS SUGAR CONVENTION.

MR. BOWLES (Lambeth, Norwood): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in view of the fact that the Additional Act to the Brussels Sugar Convention of the 5th March, 1902, was signed on behalf of His Majesty's Government on the 28th August, 1907, the day on which this House was prorogued, that His Majesty's Government have undertaken to ratify that Additional Act by 1st February, 1908, and that when signing the Additional Act the Swedish Plenipotentiary declared that his Government authorised him to sign it, notwithstanding that the Swedish Diet only met on the 15th January, 1908, in the conviction that if the approval of the Diet had not been given in time a request for an extension of the time allowed for deposit of ratification beyond the 1st February, 1908, would be favourably received, he will cause such a request for extension of time to be made on behalf of this country in order to afford this House an opportunity, previous to the ratification, of expressing its approval of the Additional Act and its readiness to adopt the financial measures necessary to enable His Majesty to carry out its provision.

SIR EDWARD GREY: We hear that a suggestion has been made at Brussels that the time for ratification should be extended for a few days. I have sent instructions that we are prepared to deposit the King's Ratification of the Additional Act, as well as of the protocol, whenever necessary, but that if other Powers agree to defer ratification till after 1st February, we will follow the same course. I may add that the declaration of His Majesty's Government was made as long ago as 6th June, of last year.

MR. BOWLES: Then are we to understand, in the event of the negotiations for deferring ratification breaking down, His Majesty's Government intend to ratify the Additional Act before next Saturday without the consent of this House?

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that last Question, may I ask whether I shall leave on the Paper for to-morrow the unstarred Question on this subject of which I had previously given notice?

SIR EDWARD GREY: Yes, I think the right hon. Gentleman might as well leave that Question on the Paper, in case I have any further information to give to the House. I think it is undesirable that the ratification should have been deferred so long as it has been. It is in the interests of traders that they should know as soon as possible whether the Convention is to be renewed or not.

*MR. BOWLES: Then, Mr. Deputy-Speaker, may I ask a Question which, I think, directly involves the privileges and financial powers of the House? By the Sugar Convention Act of 1903, the House agreed to provide the yearly expenses incidental to the working of the Brussels Sugar Convention, 1902, from the 1st September, 1903, to 1st September, 1908, absolutely, and after that to continue to provide them for one year, and so on from year to year, conditionally upon the Convention not being denounced. By the Additional Act, which the Government proposes to ratify without the consent of the House, it is provided by Article III that these same expenses shall continue to be provided out of public moneys after 1st September, 1908, not conditionally, nor from year to year, but absolutely and inevitably until the 1st September, 1911, and practically certainly until 1913. I wish to ask, is it competent for the Government to pledge Parliament beforehand and without its consent, to provide for three years certain and for five years practically certain, moneys which Parliament has hitherto only agreed to provide conditionally and from year to year?

*MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: My Answer to the hon. Member is that the undertaking of the Government does not commit the House of Commons. When the Vote is submitted, the House will have an opportunity of expressing its opinion.

BALLOT FOR BILLS AND MOTIONS.

Ordered, That no Bills, other than Government Bills, be introduced in anticipation of the ballot, and that all Members who desire to ballot, whether for Bills or for Motions, for Tuesday, 4th February, and Tuesday, 11th February, and Wednesday, 5th February, and Wednesday, 12th February, do hand in their names at the Table during the sitting of the House on Wednesday, 29th January, or Thursday, 30th January, and that a copy of such notices be handed in at the latest during the sitting of the House on Friday, 31st January.

That the ballot for the precedence of the said Bills and Motions be taken on Friday, 31st January, at a convenient time and place, to be appointed by Mr. Speaker, and that the presentation of Bills on Monday, 3rd February, be taken immediately after Questions.—(*Secretary Sir Edward Grey.*)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (KING'S SPEECH, MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

Ordered, That the Proceedings on the Address, in answer to His Majesty's Speech, shall, until concluded, have precedence of all other Orders of the Day, and of Notices of Motions, at all Sittings for which they are set down.—(*Secretary Sir Edward Grey.*)

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [29th January], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

Most Gracious Sovereign,

We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Lehmann.*)

Question again proposed.

*Mr. RAMSAY MACDONALD (Leicester), said he was sure the House would not be at all surprised that he should rise to move an Amendment expressing regret that, that in view of the distress arising from lack of employment, His Majesty's advisers had not seen fit to recommend any legislation dealing with the subject. The figures of unemployment, according to the latest official returns, had now reached the somewhat alarming proportion of 6·1 per cent., and according to the newspapers, in every industrial town in the country at the present moment the Distress Committees were beginning to consider new schemes for unemployment. They were informed that an army of unemployed was marching from Manchester, and had got as far as the Midlands, upon a visit to this city. Immediately after the trade boom, at a time when they would imagine they would have been relieved of the troubles of the unemployed problem, they had it raised at once in its simplest and most complicated forms. The Patronage Secretary, had recently made certain observations about the practical capacity of bankers and employers of labour in politics, and he would like to ask why it was, with such an exceedingly simple problem as this, that in one house they had a baker wanting shoes, and in another house a shoemaker wanting bread, and that the baker was told that his labour was not required, and the boot and shoe operative that his labour was not required—in spite of the practical capacity of the bankers and employers of labour, that exceedingly simple problem of exchange had not yet been solved.

Mr. GEORGE WHITELEY (Yorkshire, W. R., Pudsey): This reference is not germane to the question.

*Mr. RAMSAY MACDONALD said he would not go out of the way to injure the feelings of his right hon. friend, but with all due deference to the Patronage Secretary, he thought those remarks were most germane to the present circumstances of the case. The point he wanted to develop was that it was time they had a new point of view, a new enthusiasm, and a new set of interests controlling the destinies of this country, and he hoped he had not unnecessarily dragged in the speech of his right hon. friend. The signs were really most alarming. The figures supplied by the Central Unemployed Body in London showed that 17,000 unemployed persons registered themselves in 1906, and 21,000 in 1907, and upon making inquiries that morning he was informed that the numbers who had already been registered this year were much greater than were registered in a similar period last year. From the 14th October to 28th January, 1908, the Holborn Distress Committee registered 239 persons as unemployed, and for the same period ending January 28th, 1907, they only registered 221 persons. At Poplar the figures were even more striking. According to information placed in his hands, he learnt from the Poplar Distress Committee that the registrations this year exceeded those of last year by 1,049, in their case the total number of registrations being 2,421 since the end of October, 1907. This latter figure also represented 3567 children under the age of fourteen. If they turned to pauperism, they found the same thing going on. Last year the President of the Local Government Board, in dealing with this subject, congratulated himself upon the fact that pauperism was on the decrease, but he was afraid that the same thing could not be said to-day, at any rate so far as London was concerned. The Southwark and Camberwell workhouses were actually full, and some districts were advertising asking for Boards of Guardians to make contracts with them to take their paupers and board and lodge them. He felt perfectly certain that there was not a Member of that House, to whatever side he belonged, or to whatever political party he owed allegiance, who would deny that that was a most appalling state of things. He thought also that there was not a single Member but had come to the conclusion that the problem was not a personal but a social problem. Even if every person in the country had the ideal virtues that the working classes were asked by certain rather thin-skinned and somewhat stilted critics of theirs to possess, and the capacity to turn his attention to every skilled trade in the country, and the very finest technical skill at his command, so long as they had the present system of industrial anarchy, when demand was never gauged by those controlling supply, when overproduction was a feature of one series of years and under-consumption a feature of another, they would have to face the unemployed problem. If that were so, it became a matter for the State to settle. The time had come to banish for ever from their thoughts the old-fashioned heresy that unemployment was merely the expression of individual shortcomings. Unemployment was the expression of the failure of social organisation, and so it became the duty of the State to protect the unemployed men from the awful horrors that attended unemployment. The most remarkable feature of the present agitation was that it had trodden close upon the heels of an exceedingly busy time. They found this extraordinary thing, than no sooner did the whirr of the busy machine of industry cease than the tramp of the unemployed took its place in the great industrial centres. The Board of Trade published the other day a set of figures about wages and hours of employment. These figures showed that £1,500,000 more were being paid in wages in 1906 than in 1905, and they showed that that benefit was distributed over a million people. What did that mean? It meant that at a time of booming trade only one million of the sum total of the wage-earners of this country had been benefited by an increased wage, and the insignificant increase—for it was only insignificant when divided up per head—came to thirty shillings per year. But the people who were always living upon the verge of poverty actually suffered decreases in wages during that period. At the same time, the cost of living went up in some respects between twenty and thirty per cent., so that if they took everything into account they had this extraordinary condition to face, that the mass of the people of the country emerged from the boom in a worse condition than they entered it. He hoped hon. Members would take a sympathetic view of this question. They had to face the problem as legislators and not merely as philanthropists or the givers of charity. No one in the House offered more commiseration on account of the troubles of his office than he would like to offer to the President of the Local Government Board. Unemployment was one of the most difficult questions that any man had been doomed to deal with. If they touched it in one direction they might simply increase it in another, and there was nobody in that House more anxious that the matter should be approached calmly, carefully, coolly, and in a scientific frame of mind than the hon. Members with whom he had the honour to be associated in that chamber, but at the same time it was pressing. Whilst they were thinking and waiting and postponing, those figures mounted up, and the awful toll of human suffering and distress became more and more grievous. They were bound to take the very first opportunity of challenging the House to face the problem and the responsibility in connection with it. The present machinery was a very simple one. It was provided by the right hon. Member for South Dublin. The act was one of the most courageous pieces of statesmanship that they had seen, at any rate in their generation. It was drafted in a hurry, and it bore upon its face the stress under which it was drafted, but it was no discredit to its authors. It was drafted as an attempt to face an exceedingly pressing situation. No man knew the effect it would have, and he was not going to criticise that Act with his knowledge acquired between 1905 and 1908. The Act afforded a most excellent foundation for future experiments and developments. He dared say that the President of the Local Government Board would tell them that he had an inquiry on foot at the present time, that there was a Poor Law Commission sitting, and he dared say some hon. Members had received, as he had received, certain inquiries from that Commission dealing with the problem of unemployment; but surely the Government was not unaware that there was a Royal Commission on Unemployment sitting in 1906, and in 1906 the Government informed them in the King's Speech that it was going to introduce an amending Unemployed Act. If the excuse was valid now that there was a Poor Law Commission sitting, then it was valid in 1906, and the Government had no business in 1906 to create expectations of a devolopment of the present law if in 1908 it was going to fall back on the fact that a Commission was inquiring into the whole subject. When was that Commission going to report? Last year they were told that a report was going to be presented this year, but surely that report was only to be a partial report. The Poor Law Commission was not going to present its report as a whole this year; he ventured to say that two or three years would elapse before they were in possession of its final report. This year it could only report upon this one question of unemployment, but he understood that the Government's contention was that when the new machinery to deal with unemployment was created it ought to be created as a whole and dovetailed into the complete machinery dealing with poverty. If that was going to be done they would have to wait for three years. So far as he and his colleagues were concerned, they were not going to do that. They objected with all their hearts and energy to mixing up the propositions for dealing with the unemployed with ordinary Poor Law proposals. The Poor Law Commission was not the Commission to investigate, deal with, and recommend in matters relative to unemployment. The Local Government Board had all the information that was necessary. It had been accumulating information for the last three years about the work of the Distress Committees. There was not a single problem that had presented itself to a Distress Committee from John-o'-Groat's to Land's End but the Local Government Board had information about it; there was not a single successful experiment made but the Local Government Board in its pigeon-holes had the explanation why it was successful; there was not a single experiment that had been a failure but the President of the Local Government Board could get up and say why it had failed. What more did any man want? The information which the Poor Law Commission was now collecting about unemployment was already in the hands of the Local Government Board in a very much more definite way than could be obtained by theoretical investigation; and he ventured to say that if the Local Government Board had itself drawn up the series of questions that had been presented by this Commission about the problem of unemployment they would have been drawn up better. He wanted to stand by the Local Government Board and to say that there was absolutely no reason why the President of the Local Government Board should not draft a Bill this year and push it through amongst other measures. The right hon. Gentleman had been making replies to requests to develop the work of the Distress Committees, and these replies had been in many cases that he had no power under the existing law. Let them take the Hollesley Bay experiment. When that land was first acquired by the predecessor of the existing Central Unemployed Body, certain negotiations were conducted with the then President of the Local Government Board. He had the result of those experiments before him, and it was perfectly clear from the printed documents that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dublin contemplated Hollesley Bay as an adjunct to a small holdings scheme. In due course the Hollesley Bay Committee approached the Local Government Board, asking its sanction to build houses at Hollesley Bay, and to develop the experiment into a small holdings experiment. The Committee had been carefully selecting men to be planted on the land at Hollesley Bay, and up to a certain date in 1907 it had selected fifty-six men for that purpose. As soon as it approached the Local Government Board it was informed that the experiment was not such an experiment at all, and that the Board could not sanction any idea that the men should be planted out in small holdings under the auspices of the Hollesley Bay Committee. His point was not a charge against the Local Government Board, although it might be pushed to that, but he said that they had the Hollesley Bay Committee training men for farm work, and opportunities for extending the experiment into small holdings, for building houses, for planting families, and taking the most advantage of the magnificent chances that Hollesley Bay had given to a great many people, but under the existing law there was no power to do it. If that was so, why should not the existing law be altered now? There was another point. Those of them who had been members of distress committees knew that the great difficulty had been, not so much one of money, but of work. When they had got their money, they had to submit a scheme of work, and recently before they got the money they had to submit a scheme of work. He did not object at all. The work was defined as having to be of actual and substantial utility. They did not allow training in that work; they could not use that work for educational purposes. If the President of the Local Government Board were not present, he would say that they had used it for training purposes, not quite knowing what was going to happen when their delinquencies were discovered. They did use the money for training purposes, but they did it knowing perfectly well that they were acting outside their proper power. Why could they not have the law changed so that training was really possible? It stood to reason that that was the proper way of using the £200,000 which the House voted year after year. There was another difficulty. How could the local distress committees, operating within a narrow area of power, discover work of actual and substantial utility? It could not be done. If they tried to pave a street they were told that that would be done in two years time in the ordinary way, and that if they did it now they were only anticipating the demand for labour that would be made two years hence. That was perfectly sound economy, but when they examined the work possible to a committee working in a narrow area, it was practically impossible for the committee to discover work of actual and substantial utility which was not anticipating some work which would require to be done in a short space of time. The Central Unemployed Body had rejected a large scheme presented by the Battersea Council relative to the making of roads, on that ground, and they were right in rejecting the scheme. The Central Body, however, should be not only critical but suggestive. This mine of information was now sufficiently great to enable the Local Government Board to take active steps in dealing with the matter.

Again, he thought everybody who had had experience in distress committees would admit that the constitution of those committees had been very faulty. They were constituted in such a way as to make it impossible to dovetail their work into the general municipal work carried on in their area. He appealed to the experience of men who had been on those committees, and he felt certain that he carried with him the President of the Local Government Board himself. Why could not they have an alteration of the law in that respect? If he wanted a text for his speech he would have found it in a speech made by the right hon Gentleman himself. On March 27th last year the right hon. Gentleman said in this House that the Distress Committees had broken down in the administration of finance, and if they had broken down in that, he did not know in what they had not broken down. The distress committees, he admitted, had shown the greatest incompetence, and few had done their work well. That was the judgment of the President of the Local Government Board upon these distress committees whom he has been keeping going by those grants of £200,000 for the last three years. Yet those committees, which had found work for only about 36,000 people out of 60,000 approved applicants who had stood the test of thorough investigation and inquiry, who had never had Poor Law relief and were independent, were going to be continued for another year or two until some Commission reported. As the Act of 1905 came to an end this year, he wished to make out that it was not sufficient for the Government merely to add it to the Expiring Laws Continuance Bill; it required amendment. He had suggested one or two directions in which it might be amended, and in moving his Amendment, he asked the House to show perfectly clearly that it was not willing to continue the existence of this machinery, which, the right hon. Gentleman himself had confessed had broken down—committees whose powers circumscribed them so that they could only find work for a little over 50 per cent. of the applicants, and whose areas were so small that they could not use the small opportunities which they had of providing work. Consequently, he had much pleasure in moving the Resolution in his name.

MR. CURRAN (Jarrow) said his only justification for seconding the Amendment was to be found in the fact that he had an intimate association from a trade union point of view with some of the people who were to-day suffering from lack of employment. The statistics placed before the House on the previous day by the hon. Member for Barnard Castle, and quoted that day by the mover of the Amendment, were absolutely correct, but he ventured to say there were no statistics which could possibly be placed before the House from any source whatever that could give an accurate idea of the number of people suffering from lack of employment. There was a large fluctuating mass of general labour, particularly in the unskilled world, which was not registered through any trade or labour organisation or in any other manner, and therefore in his opinion the figures which had been quoted by his colleagues were not an exaggeration but actually an under estimate of the amounnt of suffering. We had unfortunately, owing to the system of landed proprietorship in the United Kingdom, a rapid influx of peasantry from rural districts into the already congested industrial centres, and these people, as a rule, had to seek employment in the unskilled labour world. They had another, and in his judgment a most important, agency contributing to the difficulty of unemployment and that was the development of mechanical appliances. The rapid displacement of labour by the development of mechanical science was to-day one of the greatest agencies for the manufacture of unemployed workers who were willing to work if they only had the opportunity of doing so. He did not want the House to misunderstand him in bringing forward this as an agency which was creating poverty and destitution in the large industrial centres. The Labour Party were not against the development of mechanical science. Those with whom he was associated in that House believed in the development of all science that could be used for the human welfare, for human physical and intellectual advancement. But what they were against and what they would continue to protest against was the use of that mechanical science for the aggrandisement of a mere handful of the population to the absolute detriment of those who were creating the wealth of the country. The question of unemployment in his judgment had never been seriously dealt with by any Government within his memory. They were not asking on behalf of those for whom they had a right to speak for any charitable doles from any Government. They wanted the present Government to introduce scientific productive methods whereby men and women who were willing and anxious to work should have facilities for working, even to the detriment of private enterprise. He recollected before he had the privilege of sitting in that House, going before the late Prime Minister prior to the introduction of the Unemployed Bill, 1905, and the body with which he was then associated placed before the right hon. Gentleman certain forms of employment that might be entered into immediately by the expenditure of some of the nation's wealth. The late Prime Minister politely informed the deputation that no Government had any right to interfere with the general operations of private enterprise. But some of his hon. friends on those benches believed it was in the interest of the population as a whole, and if the Government of the country had the interest of the population at heart, it was their business to open up useful channels of employment, irrespective of whether they interfered with private enterprise or otherwise. There were a good many business men on all sides of the House—excluding the Labour Party, the members of which were often told that they possessed no business capacity —who had, during the recess, been criticising their policy. Their critics had largely been those who were to be found among promoters of successful companies for the introduction of mechanical appliances for the rapid production of wealth, and for sharing out the profits among the investors, to the detriment of those who were engaged in the various operations. That might be business, but it was not always humanity, and until they found a Government prepared to tackle this problem seriously, he very much feared that the Labour Party would have to make this a front rank question both inside and outside the House of Commons. They might be excused for asking the House to consider this question from a non-party point of view. In introducing this Amendment it was not the desire of the Labour Party to score off the Government or anybody else. Their business was to draw the attention of the House and of the country to the widespread and deep rooted problem of unemployment. The hon. Member for Waterford, on the preceding day, made reference to cattle driving in Ireland, and they had recently heard a good deal about that nefarious system. But if hon. Gentlemen who regarded it as a ruthless method on the part of certain politicians would accompany him and the hon. Member for Woolwich down to the Victoria and Albert Docks when a ship came in, and if they would watch willing workers clamouring for the work of discharging or lading the vessel, and see the way in which, to prevent them injuring one another, the police had to drive back these human cattle, it would open their eyes. Driving the human cattle—where? Back to look at the wives who had not had a square meal for perhaps three or four days, back to look at children, naked and hungry, who by the law of the country were driven to school with empty stomachs. Could they expect Labour Members to be prepared to sit quietly and wait for that piece-meal philanthropic charitable legislation that had been doled out to them up to the present? He submitted that the £200,000 per annum now granted was a mere drop in the ocean, so far as the relief of unemployment was concerned. And yet £70,000 out of that was handed back into the Treasury, by way of economising the taxation of the country, while our best men and women were starving! Had they not a right under such circumstances to enter a determined and deliberate protest in that House against such a policy. They were only asking for justice for the people. They were told to discriminate between the unemployed and the unemployable—the wastrels of society. They admitted on those benches that there were men and women in the lower strata of society who could not perform a fair day's work for a fair day's wage. But he, personally, resented the efforts of any statesman, either on public platforms or in that House, to place the responsibility for that on the shoulders of those unfortunate individuals. They were society's outcasts—the victims of the mechanical science that was going on in their beautiful capitalistic world. They were driven from the land, from the home of their fathers in the country, and they had become wastrels of society, and often the very men thus driven out when they committed a petty larceny were tried before a tribunal consisting of men who were partly responsible for making these people what they were. He wanted to submit to the House that this was a humanitarian question. The rights of humanity were more than the sacred rights of property so-called. He fancied some of the hon. Members above the gangway would be declaring shortly that they had a cure for all these evils that afflicted society. But unfortunately for them these evils were not confined to the metropolis of this country; the same conditions obtained in New York and in Berlin. The solution of the problem did not lie in in the taxation of imported commodities. It did not lie in any revision of our fiscal conditions. It lay in the checking of monopoly, and in the prevention of the development of that form of—should he call it greed?—which to-day was driving the best manhood and womanhood of the country out of the industrial system, out of the possibility of producing wealth. If the Government would only recognise the evils of the present system of wealth production and distribution, if they would only recognise what the law of competition—might he add, inhuman competition—was doing for our commercial industries, surely then, they would realise their responsibility for opening out facilities for employment for the starving men and women of our industrial centres in the rural districts of the country. He might be told that this was rank Socialistic heresy. They had had many definitions of Socialism during the Recess. The late Prime Minister, the present Leader of the Opposition, stated at Birmingham, while denouncing Socialistic doctrines, that a man had a right to what he earned. Well, that was exactly what the Socialists said, and if the late Prime Minister had taken that principle seriously to heart, they might hope to see him take his place among them on those Benches at the earliest possible opportunity. The definitions of Socialism by leading Members of the Opposition and by leading Members of the Government varied very slightly. They were unanimous in their denunciation of theories that were alleged to be put forward. He had been anxiously awaiting a definition of Socialism from the President of the Local Government Board, and he could only say that, if that right hon. Gentleman would define Socialism as he used to in the old days, he would give his present colleagues such a shock that they would have many sleepless nights. He appealed to all Members of the House to consider this problem, not from the standpoint of Party, but from that of humanity. Human welfare was more to him and his colleagues than scoring in debate in that House. They were determined to make this question the first plank in their platform, and they desired to get the assistance of hon. Members in all parts of the House to prevent a revolution in this matter. It was not always so-called agitators who produced revolution. Very often it was brought about by the cool and callous indifference of people in authority. Not long ago, in Russia, there was an internal revolution, at a time when that country was in difficulty with other Powers, and the cause of that revolution was to be found in the ignoring by the autocratic powers of the country of all appeals from the democracy and the suffering peasantry. The Labour Party earnestly appealed to this democratic assembly and to the Government to tackle this problem fearlessly and courageously. If they did so they would have the people and the working classes behind them, and even if the Government lost place and power they would have the satisfaction of knowing that they had only gone down in their efforts to remove from British civilisation the stigma of compelling its best manhood and womanhood to starve.

Amendment proposed—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'and further we desire humbly to express our regret that, in view of the distress arising from lack of employment, Your Majesty's advisers have not seen fit to recommend any legislation dealing with the subject.'"—(*Mr. Ramsay Macdonald.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. MASTERMAN (West Ham, N.) congratulated the members of the Labour Party both upon the promptitude with which they had brought this question before Parliament and upon the admirable tone and temper displayed in the speeches of the mover and seconder of the Amendment. He recognised that the raising of this question in the House was not only desirable, but inevitable, but he would have liked to have had from the seconder a little more indication of what he proposed. The criticisms of the Unemployed Act which they had had from the hon. Member for Leicester and the suggestions for modifications of its provisions did not carry them very far, being criticisms of rather minute detail. He would like to join most heartily with the two preceding speakers in declaring that this was no party question. Every party had assumed responsibility in the matter and no party could profess unconcern. He had very often thanked the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Dublin for his Act dealing with the question. Although that Act was in many respects a failure, he believed that the experimental work being done under it would show the way for future developments. No Government could shelve this problem; if they tried, the problem would shelve them. The hon. Member for Jarrow had uttered some remarks as to what was fantastically called Tariff Reform being looked upon as a remedy for unemployment. He would not attempt to develop that point; he would only say that in so far as tariff reform had made any progress at all in the country, it was making it out of this question alone. Its supporters promised employment to all—a promise that was very freely and liberally offered in Mid Devon and elsewhere. He had heard a story, partly ludicrous and partly pathetic. One of his friends had recently investigated the case of the unfortunate men at Hollesley Bay, and asked their opinion as to the cause of unemployment, and what remedy they proposed. The great majority had come to the conclusion that the only remedy was to keep out the goods of foreigners. That might be useful perhaps to certain forms of skilled labour, but there was about as much hope of its serving the cause of the unemployed as of the conversion of millionaires on this subject. It was not because people believed the complicated or simple financial argument, but it was the fact that the unemployed were offered an alternative by one Party, while no alternative was offered by anyone else, which led them undoubtedly to declare that these people at least were probably trying to do their best for them, and would give them a chance of work. If he ventured to address the House on this subject, it was because he had given some kind of intimate consideration to the various experiments which had been tried, which consideration had necessarily been forced upon him by his responsibility as representing a district where unemployment was not sporadic but chronic, and where they have such a contrast as 18 per 1,000 of the population out of employment in contradistinction to less than 1 in Manchester and other large northern towns. The distress committee of his district had been compelled to adopt almost every kind of expedient which was possible under the law, though not with entire success, and therefore he thought the experience gained under such conditions might be useful to Members of the House in forming up their opinions as to future legislation. He had said that the distress committees had failed, and he repeated that statement to-day. As one who had been a member of local bodies he had the natural hatred and contempt of all local bodies for the Central Executive. Certainly there was no desire on his part to defend the Local Government Board, which personally he thought needed severe cleansing from top to bottom. But if Members, instead of indulging in rather vague discussion, took the trouble to investigate the actual course and development of the subject, they would find that if there was any criminal responsibility in this matter, in the neglect of a great oppoıtunity, in the return of a great part of the money which had been voted, it rested far more with the apathy and indifference and sometimes contempt of the local authority represented by the distress committee than with the Local Government Board. He knew that it had been exceedingly difficult to find work of a satisfactory kind under the definitions of the Act. He believed, however, that it would be as difficult to find satisfactory work if those definitions were enlarged, and he must confess that he had the profoundest distrust of any kind of organisation of skilled unemployed labour in either municipal or national concerns. He was perfectly willing to listen to any kind of argument as to the organisation of State cotton mills, jute factories, docks, or anything they liked, but in the name of all that was sane in Socialism, they were not going to start national industries out of unemployed labour—labour which had been squeezed outside the ordinary demand. But that did not mean that they could do nothing for the unemployed. He believed that development was possible along three lines, and he could not see any other lines save those three. They had tried the rather heartbreaking experiment of local relief work. The sole idea of most distress committees was to level a bit of land that did not want levelling, or sweep what did not want sweeping. But he could not believe that they were not making progress in this particular matter. These so-called relief works had steadily improved from year to year. Whereas they had at one time reckoned the work under these experiments at something like 800 per cent. more than it would have been with ordinary labour, they had now reduced that difference to something like 40 per cent. more than the normal value. What exactly did the experiments mean? They meant that the perpetual presence of casual labour, owing to the scandalous system described by the hon. Member for Jarrow, and the low grade factories, had developed a parasitic industry. They had a population along the riverside, and elsewhere in similar circumstances, which was the product of these industrial conditions—a population which had got out of the habit of regular work, which was accustomed to work two or three days a week, and which competed every day outside the docks when work could not be obtained there. He strongly pleaded with the House or the Government, in any kind of organisation which they might see fit to adopt for the utilisation of labour squeezed out of the ordinary demand, that they should take very great precautions that the labour should not consist of a system of industry which ought to be got rid of—a system such as the casual employment of men and women by private firms. They had been offered already a Bill to deal with the Port of London, and they had been told that it was not a Bill for philanthropy but for business. Philanthropy was business, and the only rational business. They should ask respectfully that whatever new dock arrangements were made on the river there should be some definite effort to get rid of this system of casual employment. The dock companies had already got rid of it; it was the shipping companies who were to blame and not the dock companies. If no attempt in that direction was made, he thought he could promise that the Bill would not be so uncontroversial as might be expected. The second attempt made was the land colonies. They had tried with some difficulty to break through the limitations which were in the Small Holdings Bill of last year in order to give a chance to the unemployed, if they wished, to get on to the land, but they had failed. Anyone not familiar with the conditions at Hollesley Bay, who thought that a large proportion of the men were willing to go on to the land, would be met with a grievous disappointment. Only 5 per cent. of the men had volunteered, according to the figures given by the distress committee, and of those it was considered that half would collapse altogether. This being the one industry in which there was an unlimited demand for labour, they had at least a right to demand that this experiment should be tried. The third alternative was emigration. Against that a very strong protest was made by many, especially among the working classes of this country. They had been for long years resisting the idea, but he had come reluctantly to the conclusion that migration in England, as in Ireland, was the only remedy in the case of certain congested areas. When he found that some thousands of registered unemployed in his district were anxious to have a new chance, even in a new country if they could not get it in their own, and when he found, despite the sensational statements about the starving unemployed in Canada, that the great majority of those already sent out had made a new start and done well, then he continued undisturbed his importunity of the President of the Local Government Board to relieve the congestion of some of these thousands of people who caused the prevalence of unskilled labour round the docks, and who now competed for two days work a week instead of having enough to give employment for six days. He would not indulge in the moving and eloquent rhetoric which he had heard from some of his friends, for he had not, like some of them, personal experience, or he might be betrayed into words not convenient in the debates of that House in recounting the stories of his friends. He would merely say that they had a very great anxiety to hear what the Government proposals were in this matter. They recognised that whatever those proposals might be, they must be experimental in the present stage. It was in very sincere conviction they asked the Government not to adhere blindly to academic, *à priori* arguments which were sometimes unanswerable in debate but often entirely disproved by practice and experience, but that they would adopt pertinacious and unwearying action in the endeavour to discover the true pathway to reform.

*THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Dr. MACNAMARA, Camberwell, N.): I advance the plea at once that the problem of unemployment is one to which every social reformer is bound to give a great deal of anxious care. I congratulate the hon. Member for North West Ham on the way in which he has dealt with this question, and I congratulate the hon. Members opposite also. I have sorrowfully to admit that in hard times and severe weather, particularly in the great towns, this problem which is before us means suffering, more especially to women and children. The question is, what can the State do in this matter? There are two things the State can do. The State can be ready with immediate palliatives to meet urgent distress, always taking care in the application of the palliatives not to create evils greater than those it seeks to remove. In the second place I think that all members are agreed that this ought not to be a party question, but that members of all parties, in season and out of season, have got to seek to enact such schemes of social reform as may strike at the root causes of unemployment, perchance sensibly to reduce its permanent proportions. Now this question of the application of immediate palliatives has been before the House for the last twenty years, in the form of circulars from the Local Government Board to the local authorities, the first of which was I think issued by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, an admirable document. Down to 1905 things remained there, but, as the House knows, in 1905, Parliament passed the first statutory enactment for dealing with unemployment. The terms of that Act are so familiar to hon. Members that I need not refer to them. I would like to point out, in reply to the hon. Member for Leicester, that in 1905, under the Workmen's Unemployed Act, there were 110,835 applications to distress committees, of which 73,817 were entertained, and work was found in 41,321 cases. In the winter of 1906-7 there were only 87,000 applications, of which 60,416 were entertained, and work was found in 36,280 cases. As to the ages of the applicants whose cases were entertained, in the winter of 1905-6 as many as 27·3 per cent. were under 30 and 56·6 per cent. were under 40 years of age. In the winter of 1906-7 the proportion was 30·2 per cent. under 30 and 58·6 per cent. under 40 years of age. As to occupations, in the winter 1905-6 of the applicants whose cases were entertained 51·5 per cent. were general or casual labourers, and 22·6 per cent. were engaged in the building trades. In the winter 1906-7, of the applicants whose cases were entertained, 52·5 per cent. were general or casual labourers and 17·7 per cent. were connected with the building trades. There were a number of unskilled persons in that category, and also a number of skilled persons; at any rate three-fourths of the applicants in both those years were either general labourers or connected with the building trade. The criticism of the Act of 1905 was pretty general because of the fact that it contained no provision for aid from the National Exchequer in order to set up a machinery to deal with the unemployed. As the hon. Gentleman the mover remarked, the problem of the unemployed was referred to in the King's Speech in 1906, when it was proposed to deal with it. It is quite true that the question was not dealt with, but I must remind the hon. Member that Parliament, no doubt as the result of the criticism of the Act of 1905, placed at the disposal of the Local Government Boards for England, Scotland, and Ireland, a sum of £200,000, covering the period up to the end of March, 1907. Of that amount, my right hon. friend has had at his disposal £170,000; and he has granted to the London Unemployed Body £48,865; to the extra-metropolitan areas, £41,215 of which West Ham got £25,000; and to the provincial committees, £15,000. Thus, down to 31st March, 1907, £105,420 out of the £170,000 at disposal has been dispensed. It has been a matter of criticism that my right hon. friend did not dispense the whole of the money. I am bound to say that I do not think that that criticism is either well informed or wise. I have been filled with admiration at the daily care and industry which my right hon. friend has given to this problem. He has investigated every application with the closest scrutiny, and few men could have worked as he has done. When the time came for my right hon. friend's holiday he went straight to Germany to study the method of dealing with unemployment there. In the first place, the policy of the Local Government Board has been (and I hope that it will receive the endorsement of this House irrespective of Party) to assist the unemployed in such a manner as to enable them to be more ready to assist themselves. In the second place, we have tried to get the grants spent on work of actual and substantial utility; and thirdly, our object has been to help the unemployed man into work without putting some already employed man out of work. It would have been the simplest thing to spend the whole £200,000 at once, or even £2,000,000; but that would have created greater evils than those which it was desired to remove. The whole problem involves grave social and economic issues; and any one who says he has an instant and sovereign remedy is a very superficial observer. With regard to the criticism that all the grant was not spent, I may say that of the thirty-one provincial distress committees who received grants at the end of the last financial year, nine had balances in hand of over £500, and five of over £100. The London Central Body had a balance in hand of £15,483. Possibly part of those balances were ear-marked for work in course of execution, but at the end of the financial year there were the balances. In the present year the Local Government Board has dispensed over £50,000 provisionally—£38,000 in and around London and £12,000 in the provinces. But my right hon. friend has so speeded up the administration of the Board that no fewer than sixty-two loans for housing schemes involving an expenditure of £333,000 have been granted in the last two years. As so many of the unemployed belong to the building trade, that must have a sensible effect. As to existing machinery, the whole thing is in an experimental stage. And I am bound to point out that the Royal Commission on the Poor Law had included in its reference this great question of unemployment. Its reference said—

> "To inquire—(1) Into the working of the laws relating to the relief of poor persons in the United Kingdom. (2) Into the various means which have been adopted outside the Poor Law for meeting distress arising from want of employment, particularly during periods of severe industrial depression; and to consider and report whether any, and if so what, modifications of the Poor Law or changes in their administration, or fresh legislation for dealing with distress are advisable."

I hope that we shall get their report—I shall be disappointed if we do not—this year. I shall be disappointed if we do not get the Report of that Commission this year, and we are bound, I think, to consider what will be the expert view of the people who have been very carefully considering this matter before we embark on further legislation, in the present experimental stage of the whole problem. Turning to the more serious problem: how can we strike permanently at the root cause of unemployment?—although this is not a Party problem, I must refer to two different schools of thought, each of which thinks it has a magic solvent. There is first the Socialist. He says: "Reconstitute society on an entirely new economic basis and abolish private ownership of wealth, the means of production and exchange." I am referring to the views of the Seconder of the Resolution who the other day at the Hull Conference said they were prepared to submit that it was impossible ultimately to solve or completely to solve the unemployed problem until the development of public ownership took a proper grasp of the people of this country, and until that public ownership was put into operation to a certain extent so as to bring the great national concerns right under the supervision and control of a Democratic Government. This sounds all right, but there is only one small difficulty. This solution is not likely to come to pass just yet; and as a practical man desiring to do something for the unemployed, I am obliged to put that proposition aside as hopelessly chimerical. Then there is the tariff reformer who also has his magic solvent, and who proclaims it vigorously and loudly from the housetops. He says: "Vote for Tariff Reform, and work for all." He says: "Keep out the foreigner, give higher wages and more work for all." I will take two extracts. In a recent speech of the hon. Member for the Walton Division of Liverpool, he said on 9th January—

> "Five per cent. of our skilled artisans were out of work to-day, while Germany could find work for every man who wanted it."

Then the hon. Member for the Ludlow Division of Shropshire whom I quote from *The Times*, said—

> "If English industries had fair play we should not have as at present two workmen running after one employer, but two employers running after one workman."

These printed assurances fall a long way short, so far as I can gather, of those that are heard from street corners. On this subject I would like to make a frank confession. If this proposal to keep out the foreigner is really to give employment to our workpeople out of work, if I honestly thought this tariff reform proposal would promote the permanent well-being of the working classes I would take it up like a shot—[An HON. MEMBER: "Give it a trial."] for we must all be concerned for their permanent welfare; but I am bound to say from all the examination I have been able to make, that notwithstanding grave social shortcomings in this country—I do not deny that they exist, and that we are here to remove them—I am irresistibly driven to the conclusion that whether we take the percentage of unemployment at normal times, hours of labour, rates of wages in particular industries, or the purchasing powers of those wages, the amount of money the workman's wife has to spend on rent, food or clothing, week by week, the people of this Free Trade country are better off than those of any of the Protectionist countries. Germany is a Tariff Reform paradise, yet they have from 30,000 to 60,000 people in Berlin marching through the streets as unemployed.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: What authority is the hon. Member quoting from?

*DR. MACNAMARA: The *Morning Post* Special Correspondent. They have these 30,000 to 60,000 marching in procession through the streets of Berlin to make this simple plea that all duties on food stuffs should be abolished. Hon. Gentlemen know that according to the reports the reply in the interests of law and order is a threat of the revolver and the sabre. I understand that America is another Tariff Reform paradise, and hon. Members have read how the processions of unemployed in Chicago are dispersed with club and whip. I am very sorry but I am bound to put the Tariff Reformer and his nostrums entirely on one side. What are some of the root causes of unemployment, and what can be done? I entirely agree with my hon. friend that one considerable cause is the influx of the labouring classes from the countryside into the towns. It is a fact that in the 1881 Census there were 983,919 agricultural labourers and twenty years after there were 689,292. Therefore in the twenty years about one-third had either emigrated, particularly to Canada, or had migrated to the towns. In the winter of 1905, an examination was made into the cases of 10,000 unemployed in London, and it appeared that from 86 to 94 per cent. of them were town-bred men pushed out of employment by stalwart villagers from the countryside. I will not put very high any single remedy for this involved problem. It is so complex that it must be dealt with in many ways.

MR. CURRAN said the hon. Gentleman was in error in stating that they were pushed out by men from the countryside. They were out because of the development of mechanical appliances.

*DR. MACNAMARA: My point is that from 86 to 94 per cent. of these unemployed men were town bred men, and that since the 1881 Census, there has been a great influx of country bred men, so that it is a reasonable conclusion that some of them at any rate have been pushed out by the stalwart villagers. We can sensibly affect the unemployed problem if we can stop that influx. I believe we will do that by the Small Holdings Act of last year. I do not say it will be done largely, but I believe the Housing Bill, by securing much more attention to the public health and sanitation in the village areas and better cottage provision, will stimulate the movement set up already by the passing of the Small Holdings Act. Then, I do not think that any man is honest who does not frankly tell the working classes in dealing with this question that a good deal of unemployment, with its concomitant misery for the child and the woman, is due to the excessive drinking habits of a section of the people. The effective revision of our liquor laws with happier and brighter environment will be to lay a good deal of unemployment by the heels. Then again, it is a fact that every year there go out from the public elementary schools of the country some 200,000 small boys who have passed the 5th, 6th, and 7th standards. They are bright and intelligent, and as far as their education has gone, it is the most thorough given in any civilised country in the world. If they could be taken at that moment, and if there could be superimposed on that education instruction in skilled handicrafts a great reform would be carried out without overloading the highly skilled labour market. But these boys, as the results of the exigencies of home life have to become wage earners at once. They get 5s., 6s., or 7s., a week as errand-boys, or by similar employment, and after a few years their places are taken by the succession of similar small victims. Being wholly unskilled, and having no handicraft, they drift about trying to find work. They find it very difficult. Nothing is more deteriorating than to be unemployed; and the result of that atmosphere is that many of them drift into the ranks of the unemployable. Thus, under twenty years of age, you have at any one time a steadily recruited army of 1,000,000 young fellows whom our present system heads straight for the hopeless army of the unemployed and unemployable. I do not want to overload the skilled labour market; but I say that if we could send these youths to trade schools and industrialise many scholarships, exhibitions, and bursaries, under proper restrictions and limitations of course, we might do something to meet this unemployed problem which is, I admit again and again a very complex one. Again, the problem might in some measure be affected if married women whose husbands are in a position to maintain them, were to stay at home and look after their children instead of underselling adult male labour. In many cases they go into the factory or workshop, and the care of the children is not what it ought to be. In regard to the children themselves, many of them go far too early to work. To-day factory and workshop half-time is legal at twelve years of age, and there are some 40,000 of these half-timers. In agriculture half-time is legal at eleven years of age, and there are some 40,000 half-timers. It would be not only an enormous benefit to the children themselves if the half-time age were extended, but it would react upon the question of children underselling their fathers in the labour market. There may be an economic necessity for child labour, but we have got to do our best to deal with it. I hold, however, that there would be less unemployment of adults if there were not so much juvenile labour. I do not say that I have touched on all the reforms necessary in dealing with this problem of the unemployed; but I hold, finally, that some reform is imperative in our treatment of the casual labourer and the tramp. The incorrigible loafer is always with us. He is an eager applicant for work to the Distress Committees, but often he cannot do the work when it is offered to him. He has lost the habit of work if ever he had it, and too often he is too physically infirm to do it. Take the case of the scheme of work to plant trees in the Washburn Valley upon land belonging to the Corporation of Leeds adjacent to their water reservoirs. In November, 1906, the Local Government Board made a grant of £1,000 to the Leeds Distress Committee in aid of the wages of the unemployed to be engaged on the work. The Distress Committee estimated that the scheme would give employment to fifty men for twenty weeks at a weekly cost of £60. But early in February, 1907, the Board ascertained that, although eleven weeks had elapsed since the grant of £1,000 was made, only £154 had been spent by the Distress Committee. The explanation was that, of 293 men who were offered employment on the work, only 139 accepted the offer, and that of these 102 men presented themselves for work. Of the 102 men who actually commenced work, fifty-six men afterwards gave it up and only two of the remainder obtained other situations. I saw these men myself trying on a bleak November day to work out in Washburn Valley, and I noticed their physical condition. I confess that to me it was a wonder that some of them were able to stick so long at the work. A considerable percentage of them ought to be looked upon as physically and morally infirm and quite unable to do a full day's work right off the reel. I quote a newspaper report of a meeting, held in the Guildhall on 20th December, 1907, of the Central Body for dealing with the unemployed in London:—

> "The Rev. J. H. Anderson complained that in connection with the London County Council scheme to employ 700 men during the winter in the parks, only 487 of the unemployed had applied for work. No fewer than 213 men registered as unemployed had actually refused work."

I daresay some of them were incorrigible loafers; but some of them were unable to do much work. Now, what are we to do with those men? They go into the tramps' ward in the workhouse. They get their bath—I am sorry to say not always in clean water. They get half a pound of bread and water for supper, and then go to a cell or to an associated ward where they sleep. They get up in the morning, receive half a pound of bread and water for breakfast, and then do their labour task breaking stones, cutting wood, or working out in the workhouse grounds. At the end of their task they go into the house, are given bread and a little cheese and water or a dish of thin skilly, again go into a small dark gloomy cell in many instances much inferior to the ordinary prison cell. At night they get another half a pound of bread and water, and in the morning they are told in effect:—"You go away, and do not come back here again." That is, they are pushed on to the next local authority. That is a silly system, because it does nothing to regenerate the men, and I have seen scores of them during the last few months. I think that that system of treating casuals and tramps is another phase of a very serious and complex problem. In the case of the really honest man who wants work and is willing to work —and I have met some, though not many—I am bound to say that that system is not only silly; it is brutal. I do not dogmatise; I am not sure. But I fancy if we were to take these men for a period and build them up physically in a scientific manner and make them fit for regular habits of work, we might save some of them as permanent honest men, and enable them to go some sort of work for a living. When we get a full Report on the subject from the Poor Law Commission it may be well worthy of consideration whether something of that kind would not be preferable to the system we are now pursuing in the casual ward. I admit, even when I have rehearsed these abiding causes of unemployment, and when we have considered all the difficulties to be encountered, that I have no magic solution for the problem. I am aware that there are forces working against us in regard to this problem which it will be well-nigh impossible for us to control. The law is now in its experimental stage. We shall do well if we score an occasional success in the face of many failures. All we can do is that all of us, of all parties, should consider that day ill-spent indeed upon which we did not devote some thought to the task of devising means whereby we may be able to remove these evils which press with so much severity on our poorer folk.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.): The peculiarity of this debate is that all those who have spoken have found a certain amount of common ground as to the facts of unemployment, but they are not in agreement as to the remedy for it. I agree with most of what hon. Gentlemen have said as to the gravity of this question. I think it is one of increasing gravity and importance, and one which is becoming more serious; and I cannot conceal that in a matter of this kind everyone is entitled to bring, and bound to bring, whatever help he can towards its solution. I think it would have been impossible for me to avoid taking part in the discussion after the references made by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade and by the seconder of the resolution, to the views expresssed by many of us who are interested in Tariff Reform. The hon. Gentleman who moved the resolution did not suggest any permanent solution of the question. In a few opening sentences he suggested that there was at the back of his mind a conviction that there might be such a reconstruction of our industrial and social system as was more particularly adumbrated by the seconder, and that that was the only cure for the evils which we deplore. So far, however, his suggestions were confined to certain small changes in the Act for which we, sitting on this side of the House, were primarily responsible. I think that some of his suggestions were good ones and worthy of consideration. I do not wish to criticise them, nor to criticise the general observations of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board as to the cause of the unfitness for work of some of the unemployed and their unsuitability for work when work is going. I quite agree that, in spite of everything you do, extravagant expenditure on drink produces physical deterioration which keeps certain people from being reclaimable for useful employment. But so far as the reduction of that expenditure can be expected to remove the evils which confront us, it ought to have produced some effect already. No one can doubt that our people are very much more sober than they were twenty-five, fifty, or 100 years ago. Without waiting for legislation, thanks partly to the general growth, shall I say, of the sense of responsibility, to the sense of decency, and partly to philanthophic and religious work done by devoted individuals, great progress has been made in the matter of temperance; but the problem of unemployment, as has been admitted on all sides, is present with us in as aggravated a form as it ever was. I think we cannot overestimate the magnitude of the seriousness of the problem, which in my opinion is of a dangerous character to the well-being of the people of the State. The hon. Gentleman who introduced the Motion said he did not rise from these benches to propose Tariff Reform as a cure for all the evils from which the State suffers. I did not suppose that he would do anything of the kind. I do not suppose that anyone will do anything of the kind, and certainly I am not here to make any such claim, but after the challenge that has been thrown out, I think I may repeat what I have said in the country, and call the attention of the House to it. I think the trouble in this country is becoming more serious, but no action the Government can take, fiscal or administrative, can maintain trade always at the same level or always at an ascending scale. Whatever fiscal system, whatever laws you have in force, there will be fluctuations of trade, and these fluctuations of trade, aggravated as they sometimes are and sometimes caused by changes in weather and hard seasons, will throw people out of employment spasmodically and seasonally from time to time, and nothing that we or any Parliament can do will prevent it. That kind of lack of employment always has been with us, and we shall always be liable to it, whatever kind of measure we may adopt. But what we have now to consider and what I beg to call the attention of the House to, is not that spasmodic or seasonal unemployment, but that there has been at a time of boom, when the Board of Trade returns are all that a President of the Board would desire—that at such a period as that, when we have had year after year an unemployed scheme in existence and funds voted to find work for the unemployed, we are confronted with a state of things which shows that good trade has not sensibly reduced the amount of unemployment, but has left it as high in those good years as it was for the preceding ten years. We are confronted with that as a state of things which has existed during a boom, and we dread to think what we may expect when the inevitable reaction from the boom falls with its full force upon us. I venture then to submit to the House, and this is my first point, that we are face to face with a new problem here, quite different from the spasmodic or seasonal unemployment which we had before—we are face to face with a chronic unemployment which we may expect to grow even in good times and to increase largely in bad. Now why is it? It is not because our people drink more; they drink less. It is not because they are less educated; they are more educated. I do not think it is to be explained by the introduction of machinery, though no doubt with machinery you require more work in order to find employment for the same number of people. Let me say in passing that the reason for the introduction of machinery is that you may produce more cheaply. That does not mean a reduction of wages. It may do in a given case, but it does not necessarily mean the reduction of the wages paid to the operative. Again, it may not mean, and constantly has not meant, judged over a period of years, any restriction in the number of people employed; on the contrary, it has led in very many cases to a very much greater employment. But at any rate, those whose god is cheapness cannot hold out the idea that the introduction of machinery is a bad thing, or is a thing which ought to be checked if the legislature can check it. I do not myself attribute it to that circumstance. I think a wider movement has been at work I noticed some time ago in *The Times* an article by an occasional correspondent who draws attention to an aspect of this question which, I think, has not received the consideration it deserves. He set himself to consider to what we owe this growth of chronic unemployment, as distinguished from the merely periodical and seasonal. He examined the Census Returns of 1881, contrasting them with those of 1901, the last available, and he arrived at some results which, he said, were a surprise to himself, and which, I think, may be a surprise to some Members of the House, and certainly have a great bearing on this question. After making allowances for certain groups of employed people who could not well be classified under one or other of the two heads I am going to mention, he divided the working population into those who were engaged in non-productive work and those who were engaged in the service of their fellows in one form or another. That includes all Government officials, Police, the Army, the Navy, and it includes distributors, carriers, and the like. What did he find? Why, that after making allowances for certain groups which he could not allot to either of those two heads, the Census enabled him to deal with, I think, 90 per cent. of the working population. He found that, although the Census of 1901 shows an increase over that of 1881 of 19 per cent.

amongst those engaged in productive labour, it shows an increase of 41·2 per cent. of those engaged in non-productive labour. Here I come into accord with the hon. Gentleman the Parliamentary Secretary. I think it is a very grave feature of our existing system that so many of our people are led into unproductive instead of productive labour. Unproductive labour is unskilled labour. ["No."] I do not think that the hon. Member would dispute my statement if he understood the words that I am using. I do not call agricultural labour unskilled labour. People sometimes talk of it as unskilled, but a good agricultural labourer is a skilled man, and there are far too few of them. [AN HON. MEMBER: "An engine-driver is unproductive."] Oh, I see the point that is made, but I say that an agricultural labourer who has drifted out of his own work and drifted into a town, may become an unskilled man. The hon. Member challenges the opposite side of my statement, and what he contends is that many of the people engaged in distribution and so on, are skilled labourers. That is quite true, but an enormous number of them are not skilled, or their skill is very limited and of a very special character, which causes them to find great difficulty in getting further employment if they once lose the particular work they have in hand. Take, for instance, carmen and carriers; of course, among carmen there is a certain amount of skilled labour in the sense that the man has a horse and must have some powers of driving it. But the general increase for twenty years among the productive labourers being 19 per cent., that amongst carmen and carriers was 117 per cent; among the dockers, of the terrible conditions of whose employment the hon. Member for North West Ham spoke, the increase has been 134 per cent. and over. Why is it? Here is a general movement which is turning off people from productive work into distributing work; from manufacturing industries to trade distribution and service. I believe that that is responsible, in part, for the new aspect which the problem of unemployment has taken; that it is responsible, in part, and a large part, for the fact that the unemployment has become chronic instead of merely spasmodic and seasonal; and if you want to go to the root of the matter you must increase the amount of productive labour for which the country can find occupation. I said just now that I was not one of those who pretended to have a universal panacea which would keep our trade always good and do away with all unemployment. I have never said anything on any platform to give colour to that statement. But I have said this, that our present fiscal system, in my opinion, aggravates the lack of employment in bad times, and restricts our expansion and increase of wealth in good times, and if I am at all right in my diagnosis, that one of the most essential reforms at which you must aim, if you are to deal with this growing question of unemployment, is that you ought to increase productive employment, then fiscal reform is the means by which you must do it. I would have been content to leave this matter there, had it not been for the remarks that the seconder and the Parliamentary Secretary made in regard to Berlin and Chicago as a conclusive argument in claiming that no fiscal system can beneficially affect the state of employment in this country. The hon. Gentleman is a member of a Government Department and has access to official returns. Who is his authority for the statement that there were 60,000 men unemployed in Berlin? Apparently, it was a newspaper statement.

AN HON. MEMBER: *Daily Mail.*

DR. MACNAMARA (handing paper across the Table): No, it is the *Morning Post*, from their own correspondent.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Do you object to my saying it was a newspaper report?

DR. MACNAMARA: No.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I see that the statement by the correspondent of this paper is that the number of unemployed is already estimated at 60,000 in Berlin and the suburbs and is causing grave anxiety. I venture to hope that the Local Government Board will try and get some better figures. I do not know whether there are any available officially, but it would be interesting for us to know if there are. If I am rightly informed, this statement is not an official statement but one which originated in an article in a Berlin Socialistic paper, which took various statistics not one of which pretended to be statistics of the number of unemployed in any particular trade, but statistics which were adjusted and multiplied as the writer of the article thought proper in order to make them correspond with the population of Berlin so as to get the 60,000. But however that may be, 60,000 unemployed appears to me to be a very unlikely figure for a town like Berlin with a population of only 2,000,000. I am not prepared to admit that any case is upset by a figure relating to a single month. For the result of the working of the two systems you must take the average over a period of years, and when you have made any allowance which you like in favour of each system the fact remains that there has been less unemployment in Germany than there has been here. The hon. Member for West Ham is very pessimistic as to any legislative panacea for unemployment. He did not believe in the Act now in force or in any Amendment to that Act, and the only remedy for unemployment that he could suggest was emigration. That is my recollection. The hon. Member is not now present in the House and if when he returns he tells me I am mistaken, well and good. His principal remedy is emigration. I do not think he put forward farm colonies as a general remedy. I understood him to say they were limited and that the only permanent remedy was emigration. I do not wish to do anything to discourage the Government from lending its assistance to organise and direct emigration, but as compared with Germany we have already a gigantic scheme of emigration. You must go back more than twenty years—to 1881—to find Germany heading the list of emigration. For many years past our yearly emigration has been very large, whilst that of Germany is decreasing. The last figures I saw of this country were forty for every 10,000 of the population. Those for Germany were four for every 10,000. What we do see is that Germany, not with the very moderate measure of tariff reform which we advocate but with a high protectionist tariff, has been enabled to absorb the bulk of her emigrants. As to America, she has very few emigrants. Some may leave America to return after a time, but vast numbers of emigrants from other countries are absorbed by her industries. We have not any figures for America which can be trusted or are fit to quote for any purpose or to prove anything by anybody; yet we know by the statements of our Consuls and by the reports of the labour bureaux that practically all who are in want of work and who are fit for work can find it, and that this gigantic influx of population has been absorbed in the industrial population. If all our unemployed had been absorbed in the same way unemployment would have ceased to exist. Hon. and right hon. Gentlemen go about the country saying that our exports are larger than ever, but the Board of Trade gives us returns to show that that is not so. Hon. Members below the gangway talk about the boom. I think the boom has been exaggerated. Outside the two great trades of this country, the textile trade and coal mining, very little advantage has been got out of the so-called boom by either the employers or the employed. And as to the work-people, how are the statements with regard to the increase of wages borne out by the *Labour Gazette* ? I do not believe that the home markets for our goods have been growing as the German market has been growing, in the last few years. If we are to beat the Germans out of the field it must be by the foreign trade. I will not trouble the House with many figures but with just one or two of the latest returns of the Board of Trade. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade has issued a return of the net exports of the United Kingdom and of Germany. It is arranged in periods of five years and begins with the five years ending 1886. It shows that at that time we had the lead of Germany by the average rate of £85,000,000 a year. In the next five years our lead had fallen to £81,000,000; in the next to £53,000,000; in the next to £33,000,000, and in the last five years ending 1906 it had fallen to £25,000,000. So that whereas twenty years ago we averaged an export of £85,000,000 a year more than Germany, last year our average exports were only

£25,000,000 more than theirs. I will not say that our system is wrong and that theirs is right, but I do say that these statistics are conclusive evidence that their system is not a bad one and has produced marvellous results. I do not desire on this occasion to say anything more. I have but re-stated here what I have stated in the country before and mean to state again, namely, that we believe that our proposed reform of our fiscal system is the only cure which Parliament can apply—the only means by which the legislature can stimulate and increase the amount of work available in this country.

MR. F. E. SMITH (Liverpool, Walton) rose, he said, not to take part in the debate but merely to put himself right with the Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board. The hon. Gentleman had referred to a speech which he had delivered at Newport on tariff reform, and had naturally quoted *The Times* report of a speech which took an hour and a half to deliver, and which quite properly could not have much space devoted to it. Since that time he had had an opportunity of refreshing his memory from a fuller report in a local paper, and so far as any figures he gave were concerned he took them and quoted them exactly as they appeared in the *Labour Gazette*. The statement he made with regard to employment in Germany was "employment in Germany is undoubtedly very good, there is as much work to do as there are people to do it." He did not even make that statement of himself, but quoted it and proposed to quote it again. The words were those of the President of the Board of Trade, and were used by that right hon. Gentleman at the recent Colonial Conference. He had found that argument very useful, and he proposed to continue to use it.

*MR. HAROLD COX (Preston) said he ventured to oppose this Motion because it called upon the Government to do something which was certainly mischievous. This was, as the Parliamentary Secretary had said, an extremely difficult question and required great thought. Hon. Members opposite were asking the Government to tackle the question without giving them a tithe of the time required. But he opposed the Motion for far deeper reasons. He opposed it because underlying it was an idea which was fundamentally unsound. The truth of his contention was shown by the request which had been made to his right hon. friend to spend the whole £200,000 placed at his disposal on the unemployed. Personally, he thought it was a great pity that the right hon. Gentleman had spent any of it, for the reason that money could not be spent for the benefit of the unemployed without others being thrown out of employment. The matter rested fundamentally on the truism that one sovereign would not pay two sets of wages. If they took £200,000 from the taxpayer and spent it in the way suggested the only effect would be that some people would be thrown out of employment in order to bring others into employment. By that policy they did nothing to solve the problem of unemployment, all they did was to redistribute employment. He agreed that this might be desirable under certain circumstances, but he denied that they were in any way solving the problem of the unemployed. What good purpose was served in employing people to plant trees where they would not grow, or reclaiming land which would be worthless after it had been reclaimed? It would be just as profitable to spend such money in the employment of powdered flunkeys as upon worthless reclamation work. He held that unless they could show that the work they wanted the unemployed to do was going to be nationally useful, it was a mistake to spend money upon it. Hon. Members opposite simply asked for money to provide work as an excuse for paying wages. If the work were useful they would of course start it at once and say "This thing has to be done." But the Members of the Labour Party did not say that. What they said was, "We want to find work for the unemployed, therefore let us invent some job that will excuse us in paying wages." [Cries of "No, no."] What they really wanted was some excuse for paying wages to the unemployed instead of bringing them under the ordinary Poor Law. The hon. Member for Leicester had spoken of the iniquities of the present social system, but he would venture to remind the hon. Member that it was much more easy to show the iniquities of a system than to invent a new one. Let them take the case, for example, of a baker who wanted shoes and a shoemaker who who wanted bread. The hon. Member for Leicester said it was a monstrous thing that those two people could not be brought together. Yet the only solution of the problem proposed by the Labour Party was to take both men and set them to work planting trees on the top of a Scottish mountain. The seconder of this Motion did not make it quite clear whether he believed in the use of machinery or not. So far from machinery being the cause of unemployment, it was the cause of employment. In the whole of the great county of Lancashire there were some 5,000,000 people who practically lived upon machinery. What was the result of the practical application of the Socialists' doctrine when administered by local authorities? In the East End of London a local authority desired to find work for the unemployed. They resolved to give up the sweeping of the roads by machines, and they employed hand labour with the result that work which by machinery cost £486 actually cost by hand labour £3,569. He contended that that was a sheer waste of national wealth, and by destroying national wealth they destroyed the means of paying labour. The whole idea of those who supported unemployment schemes was that they should provide comfortable work for the unemployed which would be something better than the Poor Law, and how was it being done? He ventured to direct the attention of the House to a case where a labourer, with an excellent character, was discharged from employment in the parks in London because his work was going to be done by the unemployed. The Socialistic right to work simply meant the right of one man to take another man's job from him. This must be so, unless they increased the sum total of the national wealth, which was the only store out of which they could pay wages. Were they going to provide work for all the unemployed at the expense of the British taxpayer? One authority had put down the number of unemployed at 500,000, and to provide all those with work at 30s. per week would involve an expenditure of £40,000,000 per annum. That would only be the beginning, for directly they had laid down that every man who chose to ask the State for work was to have it found for him at 30s. a week there would be a great many more than 500,000 to provide for, and the £40,000,000 would have to be greatly increased. Then it should be remembered that the people doing this work at 30s. per week would be doing work that was not wanted. It was very easy to say that what people wanted was work, but that was not so; what they wanted was wages, and work was the only means of getting wages. Unless they increased the means out of which wages were paid they could not possibly increase employment. Socialism would not increase the funds out of which wages were paid, neither would Tariff Reform. How could they possibly increase the supply of commodities which were the real wages of labour by shutting out the good things that foreign countries were willing to send us? He was aware that some hon. Members opposite believed that Tariff Reform was going to make work for everybody. Did they believe for a moment that they could increase employment by shutting out foreign goods from this country? If so, how was it that not a single hon. Member opposite had ever had the courage to propose to shut out foreign goods by absolute prohibition? Hon. Members opposite boasted of their moderation in this matter. They contended that the working classes were being ruined by the importation of foreign goods, and what did they propose? Simply a miserable 10 per cent. tariff. That was their remedy. What would the whole effect of such a tariff be? It would merely enable the home producer to sell at a higher price than he would otherwise have been able to command. It was clear that there would be no protection unless the home producer was put into a better position. In other words, it meant enabling the home producer to get a better price, not necessarily better than he was getting to-day, but a better price than he would get without protection. The home producer's customers would have to pay that better price, therefore, they would have to part with more of their money, and they would be left with less money to spend upon other things. In other words, they would have less money to spend in giving employment to British industries. It was a great mistake to discuss this question of unemployment as a question apart. It was part of the broader question of poverty. The rich did not mind being unemployed. They could only approach the solution of this great problem very gradually on the broad general lines which the world had hitherto followed. He did not think any hon. Member opposite would contend that this country was poorer now than it was, say, 100 or 200 years ago. [AN HON. MEMBER: "Yes."] This nation and most other nations had enormously advanced in wealth during the last twenty, 100 or 1,000 years. Their policy, therefore, should be to continue on the same lines, and instead of destroying those fundamental institutions which had enabled them to make so much progress in the past, they should utilise those institutions to secure still greater progress in the future.

MR. KETTLE (Tyrone, E.) said he had never before listened to a debate in the House which had so convinced him of the inability of the House of Commons to grapple with any of the characteristic economic problems which affected Ireland. Certain nostrums had been put forward for the solution of the unemployment problem. With reference to tariff reform, if it could be directed from Dublin and made to operate in favour of Irish products, probably they would be able to coincide with some of the Tariff Reformer's ideas, but the present tariff reform proposals would only have the effect of benefiting certain unemployed politicians sitting on the Front Opposition Bench. It had been said that Socialism would be an effective cure, but he did not want to discuss that. He agreed with everything in Socialism except the theory upon which it was based. The solution he would venture to put forward for unemployment was Home Rule. The economic differences between Ireland and England were of such an organic character that practically none of the discussion which had taken place upon this Motion had any reference to Ireland. In England they had to deal with a population 65 per cent. of which was urban and industrial, whilst in Ireland 65 per cent. of the population was rural and agricultural. In England they had started some people upon small holdings and in Ireland they were making a systematic effort to develop other industries beside agriculture. But the differences between the two countries were so marked that the greater part of the discussion which had taken place was entirely irrelevant to Ireland. The problem of unemployment in Ireland was more familiarly known as the problem of emigration. No less than 46,000 people emigrated from Ireland every year because they could not find employment. Last year the figures showed a marked increase over the previous year. In Ireland they had a very simple way of dealing with unemployment, viz., exporting the population to the United States. Those 40,000 to 50,000 emigrants were not the wounded soldiers of industry, they were not men and women broken in strength and spirit by circumstances against which they were not able to cope, but the very flower of the young manhood and womanhood of Ireland. That was the characteristic problem of unemployment in Ireland and how were they going to solve it? They could only solve it by accepting and carrying into operation the programme of the cattle-drivers. The state of things in Ireland was due to the misuse of Irish land by the Irish ranchers. Although the preservation of peace in Ireland, he agreed, was an important thing, in his opinion the preservation of the people was a good deal more important. He did not propose to say one word more about the great problem connected with the land beyond stating that the only way to solve the question of unemployment in Ireland was to split up the great ranches and put them in possession of men who would till them. There were, however, one or two subsidiary points. With regard to what the Secretary to the Local Government Board had said about education, he wished to point out that in Ireland there were scores of boys and girls going through a literary curriculum in the schools which was having no effect upon them except to enable them to read the daily papers. In his opinion at least two-thirds of those boys and girls would be far better served if they had better opportunities of industrial training and technical instruction. The emigration returns showed an enormous predominance of what was called the unskilled labourer, as far as Ireland was concerned. Complaint had been made that legislation affecting these matters was enormously behind in England, but he wished to point out that in Ireland they had not got an Unemployed Act, and they had no machinery of any kind whatever for dealing with the problem outside the Poor Law. There was no man in Ireland who had had any personal experience who would disagree with him when he said that the system in existence did nothing but degrade and incapacitate everybody who took refuge within its portals. The Poor Law Commission had investigated this question thoroughly and had reported upon it, but their recommendations had not been acted upon although approved by everybody in Ireland who understood the problem. And what was the reason for this? Simply because a Commission in England had been entrusted with some powers as far as Ireland was concerned, and Irishmen were being compelled to wait for a reform of the Irish Poor Law system until a report had been made, which could not possibly give them one fresh fact affecting the solution of the problem in Ireland. The real thing which lay at the basis of a solution of this question in Ireland was the land problem. That problem must be tackled before very long in a courageous and radical manner. If the Government would only do that they would deprive hon. Members sitting on the Front Opposition Bench of an opportunity of engaging in platitudes and diatribes relating to law and order in Ireland.

Mr. H. J. TENNANT (Berwickshire) said the House had listened with interest to the speech of the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, and more specially to that part in which he called attention to the fact that Ireland sent from her shores a large proportion of her sons, not as the wounded soldiers of industry, but as young men just beginning life, full of youth and health and strength —men who might be most capable citizens of the country. If he felt that the money expended by the State in endeavouring to deal with the question of unemployment were thrown away, he would say, and he thought the House would agree with him, that no more should be spent. As the Parliamentary Secretary had pointed out, the money expended had been devoted to schemes which were largely experimental. It was true that some of the money had been most disadvantageously spent; he concurred with the hon. Member for Preston that some of it had been wasted. But it had not been all wasted. Experiments had been made in providing work in some parts of England, and in providing workrooms in London for women, which were of the greatest value. The President of the Local Government Board and the Parliamentary Secretary were ever ready to listen to the cry of women and children, and he would appeal to them to use the powers placed in their hands to put women upon the land for the cultivation of fruit, and more particularly the preserving of fruit, and the establishment of model laundries in which the work could be carried on by women, who would in this way be rescued with their children from the terrors surrounding town life. He controverted the statement of the hon. Member for the Walton Division of Liverpool that employment in Germany was all that could be desired. That might have been true in the month of June last. He remembered that a debate took place in the Reichstag in which the Minister for the Interior said that he viewed with great alarm the conditions of unemployment in Germany. He was pleased to hear the speech of his hon. friend the Parliamentary Secretary. The Local Government Board was paying great attention to these matters. The Parliamentary Secretary had spent his holidays in trying to come to some decision as to the best means of spending the money, and he had arrived at the conclusion at which one and all, he supposed, had arrived, that there was no one nostrum which would be an absolute cure for the present condition of things. He was pleased moreover to know that in the view of the Parliamentary Secretary unemployment was to a certain extent created not by the system of capitalism, but to the system under which capitalism was worked by parties employing children, who competed against parents, and by bringing into factories married women who ought to be attending to their homes and to the comforts of their children. That was what led to the bringing up of sickly children who, when they grew up, filled the ranks of the unemployed. He had seen enough of the dangerous trades to know how they conduced to unemployment. If parents suffered from lead poisoning, the results were bound to be felt by the children. He believed that the Hollesley Bay experiment had done the greatest possible good. It had shown that people unacquainted with agriculture could be trained to work upon the land, and that their labours could produce the best possible results. He did not concur with what was said by the hon. Member for West Ham as to the percentage of persons who became qualified in this way for agricultural work. He believed that a very large proportion of the people at Hollesley Bay were able to undertake agriculture upon their own resources at this moment. The late Chancellor of the Exchequer had pointed out that we had been living in booming times, and that our trade had shown extraordinary expansion. The right hon. Gentleman had also stated that the unemployed were increasing in number. He believed that to be true, and a number of the causes and remedies had already been indicated. There was yet another matter which he would ask the Government and all who were interested in the problem to take into serious consideration. If we were now, as he believed we were, upon a downward curve in our commercial prosperity, it behoved each and all, and more particularly the Government, to consider seriously whether there were those experiments which might be tried, and on which eventually they might be able to promote a scheme, not of an experimental kind, but one which would overcome the great evils with which they had to deal.

MR. WALTER LONG (Dublin, S.): I do not propose to detain the House more than a short time, but I think it would not be respectful on my part if I were to allow the debate to close without saying a few words with reference to my share of the responsibility for the legislation to which such constant allusion has been made. This debate has made more than one thing clear. I entirely agree with many of those who have spoken that this question is above the level of mere party questions. But I cannot forget that the Party which criticised so severely the Act of 1905 when it was brought forward has not during two years of office been able to elaborate anything better. It is only fair that when we have the opportunity we should remind them that when they were in our position on this side of the House they indulged in criticism which now they cannot translate into action. Only two suggestions for dealing with this problem have been made in the course of the debate. The first is that of Socialism, recommended by the seconder of the Amendment. His argument, used as it was by him, makes it perfectly clear that those of us who do not share his views, and who do not believe that the advocates of Socialism have ever shown how they are going to remove the causes of unemployment, find it impossible to vote for the Amendment. That Amendment, whatever the arguments used in support of it, clearly leads to the inference, if not the absolute conclusion, that it is only by an entire change in our social system—an entire change root and branch—a remedy is to be found for the difficulty which we are now engaged in discussing. Therefore, although I have one or two small suggestions to make, I do not make them as one who is prepared to support the Amendment. I deeply deplore, as everyone must, that unemployment is so serious an evil and that it does not tend to diminish but is actually increasing, as has been eloquently pointed out, in a time of great trade boom and proclaimed by all as a time of great prosperity. I am not sure whether the praise the hon. Member for Leicester has been good enough to bestow on me as responsible for the Act of 1905 is due so much to its enactments as to the fact that the hon. Member, capable as he is of making the fullest possible use of any advantage that comes in his way, has found it useful to him in advocating his own policy. I have never been other than clear with the House as to the objects of that Act, and the reasons which influenced the Government of which I was a member in passing it into law. Although it has been criticised to-day and on previous occasions and some have described it as useful, I do not think the Minister now at the Local Government Board will deny that, if this Act had not been on the Statute-book, and if it had not been for the experience gained from its administration, although it has not done all that was expected of it, this debate would not have been so interesting, and we should have been deprived of much accurate and useful knowledge on the subject. The Act is worth a little more commendation than some hon. gentlemen are prepared to give it. The mover of the Amendment said there had been 60,000 selected applicants for work before the Act came into force. That may be so; but we had no means of knowing whether the men were capable or not. If some public money has been wasted, it was wasted much more prodigally before. It does not matter whether the money comes out of the poor rate for the maintenance of roads or from grants from the Local Government Board to find work for the unemployed—the money comes from the pockets of the people. The real object of the Act is to enable authorities to deal with unemployment in a more practical way, and in that respect it has been justified by results. I should be glad if it were possible to enable the central authority to carry the Hollesley Bay experiment somewhat further, though that was not the basis of my scheme, and I think we are much indebted to Mr. Fels for the experiment being made; but when I say that, I wish frankly to add that I am very loth to urge upon the President of the Local Government Board any precise or definite step in regard to the existing Act for this reason. It was well said by the proposer of the Amendment that in our desire to deal with this problem in a sympathetic and humane fashion we might actually do more harm than good by the steps we took. The Local Government Board must have information at their disposal which is not at the disposal of the House, and we will have to trust to that Department more and more. They must be the best judges of the way in which experiment could be extended or some fresh effort made. When the hon. Member for Preston put the question whether the condition of the people of this country would be improved by checking the introduction of foreign-made articles, I could not help asking myself whether that argument was always going to prevail with those who now, in the streets of our seaport towns, seek work which they cannot get. and who see every day on the quays of those ports multitudes of articles brought in which they can make. We have not got the powers of purchase of which the hon. Member spoke. The right hon. Member for East Worcestershire has spoken not merely for himself, but for his colleagues. We have never said that work for all would be found by any change, but we believe that by the change of which he spoke more work would be found. Looking for the present at the problem from the narrower standpoint, I would urge that efforts ought to be made to prevent the unemployed being so long out of work as to become unemployable. This can be done by machinery of the kind set up by the Unemployed Act. That Act may want amendment; its machinery may want to be extended. I have not before considered the question of the widening of the area; but I do not see why that should not be a suggestion worth considering, although I do not quite follow how it is going to confer the benefit suggested. Other Amendments may be introduced to strengthen the Act. If these Amendments followed the principle of the Act, they would receive from the Opposition favourable consideration. By the changes the Government are not prepared to make they would largely lessen the pressure which led to the creation of the unemployed. The temporary problem can be dealt with without adopting the policy of hon. gentlemen who have to-night taken a totally different view from ours. Although I remember the criticisms of hon. and right hon. Members opposite when I and my colleagues were in their places, I will not retaliate. I do not wish to play the part of critic or of active enemy. While I have the most hearty sympathy with the movement which has for its object the lessening of the evils arising out of unemployment, I cannot myself vote for an Amendment which I believe would carry with it the inevitable consequence of committing my Party to a change of a character we do not approve, and for which, if we were in the places of Ministers, we could not be personally responsible.

Mr. CROOKS (Woolwich) said that he was delighted that the right hon. Member for S. Dublin had intervened in the debate, but he thought that the right hon. Gentleman would admit, so far as his first observations were concerned, that his references to the criticism of his Act did not apply to hon. Members below the gangway. The Charity Organization Society, which was a society of organization and of no charity, said that there would have been no Bill—that it would never gone through the House—but for Poplar.

Mr. WALTER LONG said he did not complain of the criticisms of the Labour Party. He admitted that they had given very valuable assistance, but they had also shared the criticism of hon. gentlemen opposite.

Mr. CROOKS said that if they had had the original Bill as proposed by the right hon. Gentleman instead of as it was redrafted after he went to Ireland, he would have been satisfied, but that was not the Act they had before them. They regretted very much that the right hon. Gentleman went away to Ireland at that time, because if he had not they would have had a much better Act than they had now. The President of the Local Government Board had said, and he believed that he would agree with these words at that moment, as he did not see why he should have changed his mind, that it was time that this question was taken out of the hands of amateurs and put into the hands of those who were paid to deal with it.

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. John Burns, Battersea): That is what happened.

Mr. CROOKS: Very well, then, they were all right. Now it had become his turn to deal with it, and of course he was paid to do it. But the difficulties of the whole Act—and he wanted to claim the sympathy of the whole House, which was undoubtedly interested at present in dealing with the unemployed question—in regard to this were created in a very large measure by the official tendency to crush the problem and not to deal with it. The administrative methods had accentuated the trouble, and the worst cases of destitution were sent to the central body with the result that the real workers were on the street waiting for work which never came. What they complained of was that the Local Government Board under this Act had power to hinder but were under no obligation to suggest schemes of work, and the remarkable schemes of administration such as Hollesley Bay, training colonies, and workshops for women, made the position almost hopeless. The principle they had always wished to establish was work and not relief for the unemployed, and to make this possible they should have the power of organization and the intention to put it in force, which had not been attempted in the slightest degree up to the present moment. The very training of the Local Government Board was against doing anything for the honest unemployed, because everything that the Department did was on a Poor Law basis. The officials could not help it, it was the training of the Department, and he would probably be as harsh and foolish as the Local Government Board if he had been trained in that school. He had been studying Poor Law administration. What had been done with regard to Hollesley Bay, which to his mind was a glorified workhouse, and not a method of dealing with the unemployed? They had always attempted to make the authorities understand that while the first duty of the central authority was to organise work, they had never attempted to do anything of the kind. They had been saying all the time "Produce to me a complete scheme which shall have my approval, and then I will consider whether I can give you a grant or not" What had been evolved out of the great Poor Law since 1839? All it had ever evolved was stone work, oakum picking, and grinding corn, work which could be very much better done elsewhere. Had hon. gentlemen ever considered that that was a waste public of money? He remembered a great outcry in 1895, when a number of people were crying for bread. They with whom he was connected opened a stone-yard. They could not get any advice from the Local Government Board in those days; they said "You must give the men a task such as they are able to perform," and the result was that they broke stones at a cost of £3 12s. 6d. a yard, when the trade union price was 2s. 6d. If a man had to pick his four pounds of oakum, they paid someone to bring him the oakum to pick, and it cost £10 or £12 a ton, and then they sold it for 10s. It was very much the same with grinding corn. Then there was a modified test for the workhouse; the loafer could always find an excuse for doing nothing. The loafer, he might say, was not confined to a class. It might be a rich loafer who had got a lot of money and would not pay it out in wages—he was loafing about spending his time in idleness, and they could not make him work or spend his money. It showed how very common human nature was, whether it was in wealth or in poverty. It was said that the wealthy man, if you gave him a job, would not stop at it. He knew that; they were the pioneers of the Empire, pushing about in all directions to find something soft, instead of something hard. Such pioneers were not often of the poorer class. They might run a Jameson Raid, or do things like that. They were not doing anything useful, but they were doing the public out of a good deal. After all, there was much of a muchness about this world. They asked the Department what they were going to do with the starving men now? Do not let them tell him that they had not a plan, or that it was not yet settled. The problem was that of to-day, and they wanted to know what the Government were going to do now. No doubt the Local Government Board would make inquiries, and the President could tell a great many good stories about inquiries. The right hon. Gentleman knew that the poor had been inquired into in every portion of their class, by one Department of the State or another. They had, indeed, sent the son of a lord to inquire, and he had a great respect for the sons of lords, because they dodged the work somehow. He was sent down to the East End to make a private inquiry as to the conditions of casual labour. Would he go to the dock gates to-morrow morning if there was a ship up, and would he see in the dark misty cold hundreds of men waving their hands in the passage-way praying to be taken on? Would he report that to the Local Government Board as a reason why they should do something, or would he make the stereotyped report that having made the necessary investigations he had to report so-and so? The half-hearted and indifferent administration of this Act had made matters infinitely worse. The Bill of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Dublin was a foundation stone on which they might have built good things, but they had not got it. The distress committees wanted a man to be in destitution before they interfered. Here again the Local Government Board's cloven hoof applied—they could not do anything for a man who was just out of work and wanted to be saved. The standard was absolute destitution before they could look at him. That was the wickedest thing in all Poor Law administration, that it could not deal with persons until they were destitute. He knew of a case of an aged woman going and offering £25 to the board of guardians as she was old and did not know how she was to go on, but she was told she had better go and spend the money as she was not yet destitute. Would the hon. Member for Preston think over that when he was pondering about thrift? The distress committees registered thousands of names and made inquiries which were distasteful to decent and honest folk. This might have been an advantage at first, but not later on. A man was asked to declare that he had not received parochial relief within a given time, and yet the Act came into operation after an exceedingly bad period, and there were a lot of decent men who had been obliged to apply for relief. A year was to elapse if a man had received relief, and if he had received it within two months he had to wait ten months and then he was told they would see what they could do. That was true, and not to be laughed at. It was a fact. There were many decent clean homes with six children in them, which men had tried to preserve, and if one of these men went just before Christmas and applied for a little bread he had to wait twelve months before he got anything under the Act, which nobody would deny needed amendment and there was no reason why it should not be amended.

They had been told and would be told many times, not perhaps by politicians who could be questioned in the House, but by others, that tariff reform was going to do it all. The references to tariff reform that day had been very guarded. It had been said that it would not solve this problem, but the gramaphone said it would, and they could not argue with a gramaphone. He remembered being in the country recently and walking down a country road with a friend to whom a farmer had sold a dog. They ran up against the farmer who said, "How is the dog going on?" His friend replied, "Oh, the dog is a very good dog. If anybody comes into the place at nights I have only to tell him to bark and he barks." That was what they did with the gramaphone. They spoke into it and sent it out into the country to bark. They said that the Government was a wretched Government, and did not the workers think a fair-sized loaf was dear at 1d. if they had not the penny to pay for it? Let them come over to the Tariff Reform and pay 1½d. for the loaf and give themselves a chance. But what was being done for the people who were waiting for their chance? Not half enough! Unfortunately these men's greatest anxiety was their next meal. Those who were half-way up the ladder and who thought they had made themselves secure against poverty, and those who were up at the top of the ladder and who believed they were absolutely safe, would do well to remember that there were multitudes of hungry men at the bottom who might some day become dangerous and pull the ladder down. The House had capacity to think and to act, and were under an obligation from the Imperial standpoint to do their best for those who were ready and willing to work unless, indeed, they were left so long that they did not care whether they worked or not. The man who came in October and implored them to get him a job, in December was a little harder in his demand; meet him in February and he said, "Have you got a job for us now. No! You are like all politicians, you can tell a good tale in election times, but you can't do anything for us." When they met that man a little later he insulted them. If they asked him then if he had found a job yet his reply was, "No, I don't want a job, I can do without it, and I can do without you too." Let the House think what that meant. The man who in October was a valuable asset, had lost his manhood in February. He had been made to crawl and cringe to distress committees; to men who in point of manhood were not fit to unlace his shoes. The hon. Member for West Ham had seemed to speak in most pessimistic terms and to think that nothing could be done, and that if left alone the whole thing would come right. Their remedy, on the other hand, was to bring into operation a Department which should find out what work could and ought to be done in times of distress; which should get out a schedule of work in afforestation, coast erosion, river reclamation, main road repairing, and even think about making a military road round the Kingdom; a department which could obtain from every local authority throughout the land a statement as to what work they had which could be put in operation in times of commercial depression. All the work should be tabulated and sent to the proper office, so that in time of distress they could apply for a grant from the Exchequer or for permission to raise a loan. Then an inspector could be sent down with the schedule, prepared perhaps six months before, and could decide when on the spot whether the work to be done should be done at the local or national expense. It could not be wondered at that those who had to hear these awful tales of want and see the hearts of brave men and women broken in this way should be impatient. The curse on man was that he should earn his bread in the sweat of his brow. Men were beseeching permission so to earn their bread, and it was denied them. How many times had not their hearts bled when they looked at the little children trying to eke out an existence selling papers or flowers or matches. Had hon. Members ever thought of those little children and compared them with their own? Had they ever thought of the life they lived with all the sweet innocence of childhood lost to them? Had they ever got into conversation with those little children of the streets: the children of the unemployed, or, if they pleased, the unemployable? They had been robbed of all their sweet innocence, their souls had been taken out of them, and in their place had been put the souls of little old cunning men and women. Wealth there was in abundance, wealth beyond the dreams of avarice—

"More than would for all suffice
Earth from her full bosom bears,
Yet in cities wolfish eyes
Haunt the windows and the doors."

Would this House never be stirred to a sense of its responsibility? Would it never be moved to live up to a sense of its obligations? Let it try to offer to willing workers work, and to unwilling workers work even of the strongest disciplinary character. For the discipline of the man meant glory for the woman and happy and contented lives for the little children.

*MR. ALDEN (Middlesex, Tottenham) said the speech to which the House had just listened was an extremely interesting one, and the point to which he would like first to refer was that at which the hon. Member had hinted in his concluding sentences, namely, the case of those who were not willing to work. They had already had a report recommending immediate legislation on that subject, and he was in accord with that report. It was high time the House did deal with that subject, which was perplexing not only all social reformers but everybody who had anything to do with the administration of the Poor Law, especially in the rural districts. He, however, wished to ask this question of the House. All were in favour of dealing with those who refused to work and of dealing with them in a most drastic fashion, but where was the logic of compelling an unwilling man to do useful work and leaving the willing man without the necessary employment? It seemed to him that they had no sound ground for dealing with vagrants and wastrels until, and unless, they undertook at the same time to deal with those who honestly desired to be employed and were unable to find work. He confessed he did not see how that question was to be answered. If they all agreed that they must compel to work those who would not labour then they must also agree that those who were willing to work must have employment found for them. He did, however, quarrel with a phrase now very much in vogue, he meant "the right to work." It was an unfortunate phrase. Rather would he speak of the duties both of the community and of the individual. It was the duty of the community to find work, and it was the duty of the individual to do the work when it was found. How far was this very large and big principle to be carried out? First, on grounds of expediency. Surely it was better that they should deal with the men who wanted work, not through the Poor Law, but by some other agency. He did not think that anyone disputed the fact—the Secretary to the Local Government Board had emphasised the point—that the treatment of the unemployed by the Poor Law was a failure. If that were so, then there was no other remedy left than that of dealing with the unemployed through local administration and through some central department. They who thought with him, contended that it would be better to pay men to do some work, even though that work could not be fully discharged, owing to physical weakness, than to leave them to the tender mercies of charity or the treatment of the Poor Law. He did not agree with many of the schemes which had been brought forward for dealing with the unemployed. He had had a fair amount of experience in dealing with this question for fifteen or twenty years, having studied it in most countries of the world. He was convinced that many of the remedies suggested were futile. They did not prevent and they did not cure. He had discovered in the records of the House of Commons a reference which dated back to the year 1698. In that year petitions were presented to the House of Commons by various felt-makers' companies in the North of England, praying that women and men of "inferior quality" might be compelled to wear felt hats, and declaring that many poor who had not got work had become subjects of charity. A Committee of the House of Commons recommended the adoption of this remedy, and it was lost by only two votes in the House. The Committee said it would set to work 100,000 poor people more than were already employed, and that a great part of those to be employed were "men, women and children such as are now relieved by charity." Some of the remedies for unemployment suggested were just about as wise as that of the felt-makers. He confessed he disliked relief works, but they were bound to have them. As the hon. Member for Woolwich had pointed out, they were dealing with an abnormal state of affairs, which he was sorry to say, bid fair to become normal. At any rate, they were dealing with a state of society which was transitional, and therefore, they must have recourse to expedients of which they would not approve if society were organised upon such a basis as all of them would wish to see. Society was not now on an ethical basis. No one could deny, whether he was a socialist or individualist, that society was not founded on righteousness, for it was admitted that the severe competition which was necessary under present conditions, bore most harshly on a poor and deserving portion of the community. That meant that the present system of society was unethical, and they could not wholly approve of it. He believed that they all in their hearts condemned it and would like to see it changed. If they started from that point of view, then, he contended, they must be prepared to make many concessions and do things which, in another state of society, they would not be ready or willing to do. In regard to most of the relief works, their desire was to tide over the present distress. His first test of relief works would be that they could honestly say, when the undertakings were completed, that something had been contributed to the well-being of the community, something which would make life more pleasant or more endurable, whether it was in the form of a beautiful park or the reclamation of waste ground for useful or recreative purposes. He did not share the view of those who threw cold water on such works. He would rather spend money in that way than in almost any other way, especially in poor districts where there was nothing beautiful to look upon. They could reclaim waste land for the purpose of a park with the money which had been placed at the disposal of the Local Government Board. Another test he would apply was that such works should give an opportunity to people who were most in need. He admitted that none of the relief works for the moment had helped the skilled man, except perhaps at the Alexandra Palace, where plumbers, glaziers, and carpenters and others to a very small extent had been employed. Within the test he proposed, it would be possible to help the large majority of those who were out of work, and who, as the Secretary of the Local Government Board had pointed out, were unskilled workmen. If they looked at the relief works which were going on all over the country it would be found that for the most part they did help the unskilled men by giving them useful work. He confessed he could not see the reason of the objection to these works, which assuredly would not be carried out under ordinary circumstances. In many districts they could not afford to do these works out of the rates, and they would never have been set on foot under ordinary circumstances, because of the additional burdens which would be placed on the ratepayers. The improvements effected in Tottenham and other places, where there were large numbers of unemployed, had been effected with the money at the disposal of the Local Government Board, which works would have remained unexecuted had they depended on the rates, because they were in the districts where the population was poorest that the rates were highest. Provided these two tests were applied, namely, that the work was useful and really did help the men who most needed it, the unskilled labourers, he contended that relief works properly and economically administered were not a bad thing. He wished that the distress committees and those who had charge of these works would make an attempt to choose better men when they could be found. They should pick the men who were willing to work, and send away those who were unwilling. There should be a manager in full charge and control of the work, and he should be able to dismiss the men who would not do the work. Some work had been discredited not because there was a want of good men to do it, but because bad men were taken on and were not turned off when they failed to do the work. The result was that a good man did not get work when he ought to have an opportunity to do it. One word on behalf of the skilled worker. Nothing had been done for him. There were not many who could suggest how to find work for skilled men, but he would venture to make one suggestion, namely, that the President of the Local Government Board should subsidise out of the public funds the out-of-work pay given to their members by trades unions. Whether the men were skilled or unskilled did not matter, because he would like to see the unskilled unionist receive out-of-work pay. He would like to see the example of Denmark copied in this respect, the only country in the world up to the present which had done what he suggested, though only on a small scale. There they had voted £36,000 to subsidise out-of-work trade unionist pay. Supposing the Government gave a grant of one-third of the money paid by trade unions as out-of-work pay during the previous year, that would be a satisfactory beginning. He would like to quote, as throwing light on this subject, figures of what had actually been done by trade unions. During the last ten years the trade unions paying out-of-work benefit pay had paid on an average £387,000 per annum. In the year 1903 they paid £500,000 in out-of-work benefit; in 1904, £652,000; 1905, over £500,000; and in 1906, £421,000. As a matter of fact, in ten years those unions spent over 22 per cent. of all the money they raised on unemployed benefits. By doing this he considered that the trade unions had made a valuable contribution, he did not say to the solution, but to the amelioration of the conditions which were the result of unemployment. He would like to see a State Department formed to deal with the unemployed problem, or at any rate there should be a sub-department to give its whole attention to devising ways and means of helping the unemployed. He would like to see those trade unions which gave out-of-work benefits subsidised, and as he suggested the amount should be one-third of what the trade unions paid away in assisting the unemployed. That would not be a bad experiment, and it would have the advantage of inducing men to join trade unions, which was a good thing in itself. In any case it would encourage thrift of the right sort. Although this was a new suggestion, and had not been tried before except on a small scale in Denmark, he trusted that the Members of the House, and particularly the representatives of trade unions, would take the matter into their serious consideration. He thought that an experiment of that sort ought to be made, for he was convinced that it would be found both wise and economic. With regard to labour colonies and reclamation work, after all they were not giving work to the unemployed specifically, but what they were doing was undertaking the training of men and making them fit to do that work in the future. A labour colony did not pretend to give men work, but what it did pretend to do was to train men and make them physically fit to do such work in the future. That was what was accomplished by labour colonies in Germany. He did not think there was any labour colony in existence which showed an adequate economic return for the money spent upon it. That was not the consideration, although they hoped to get a reward in the renewed health, strength, and vigour of the men who entered those colonies in a weak state. Labour colonies were intended to restore men once more to the ranks of useful citizens. He was quite aware of the difficulty in regard to Government works. That was a frightfully complex question, and it was often open to doubt whether they would not do more harm than good by starting such works. The discussion which had already taken place showed clearly how many hon. Members hesitated in regard to this or that particular proposal. Personally, he shared that doubt and hesitation to some extent. It had been pointed out, however, that there were Government works which might be started which the community needed and the State required, and which no private individual was able to do or undertake. For instance, there was afforestation. No private individual could be expected to afforest his land, because it would take a good many years, and it would not be a profitable experiment for a long time. Nevertheless, every estate which had tried it, the owner of which had been willing to wait a good many years, had found the work profitable. Where Germany had succeeded in this respect this country ought to be able to succeed, and at any rate he thought it was worth while making the attempt. They did not wish to make experiments which were unnecessary, and they did not desire that trees should be planted upon bleak moors where no trees would grow. Under the Woods and Forests Commissioners' jurisdiction there were large tracts of land which had been put aside for afforestation work, and one of those tracts had been chosen in Scotland. Many other areas had been inspected by Government experts and might very well be purchased by the Government. If he had had control of the surplus held by the President of the Local Government Board amounting to £70,000, he would have invested it in land, which later on might have been afforested or prepared for afforestation. There were in this country from forty to fifty small harbours upon which £40,000 or £50,000 might have been spent with great advantage to the community. It was such schemes as he had outlined that he suggested the Government should keep in reserve for the men who were out of work for comparatively long periods. He was not so pessimistic upon this question as some of those who had spoken, but his contention was that if he could only get one man in a Government Department to give all his time to this problem a great deal might be accomplished. The President of the Local Government Board was engaged in work of different kinds all over the country and it was impossible for him to devote sufficient time to what ought to be a most important part of the work of the Local Government Board. There ought to be one man whose business it should be to study and work at this question. If that were done schemes from all parts of the country could then be carefully considered, analysed and weighed, and they might be able to do a great deal to ameliorate the hardships of the unemployed question and gradually absorb the unemployed into regular channels of work, and in that way they would be doing a great work for the health, the life, and the happiness of their fellow men.

MR. BRACE (Glamorganshire, S.) said he rose to express regret that the King's Speech contained no direct provision for dealing with the problem of the unemployed. He did not believe that this question could be dealt with by one comprehensive measure, and he was rather inclined to the view that they would have to depend somewhat upon such measures as the Small Holdings Act and the Housing Act, which had been promised by the President of the Local Government Board. He did not think, however, that to promise one or two measures of this kind really met the problem at a time like the present, when it was so acute. At the present moment they wanted a proposal which gave promise of some relief pending the carrying into operation of the greater schemes which it was proposed to embody in the Housing and other Bills. He was far from believing that the proposals of the tariff reformers were likely to give them any relief. Hon. Members on the Opposition side invited them to give their schemes a trial, but, in his opinion, it was much too dangerous an experiment. When they were called upon to alter the fiscal system of the country, they must make sure that the last state would not be worse than the first. He was convinced that if this country adopted tariff reform the workers would be infinitely worse off, and he had no hesitation in declining any such proposals as offering any solution of the unemployed problem. Had not protectionist countries the same problem to face? One would imagine, to hear the arguments which had been put forward, that in protectionist countries they had no unemployed problem at all. He was an affiliated member, and the society he represented was also affiliated, with a great international movement, which had representatives from Germany, Austria, France, Belgium and America. What had they been told by those colleagues upon the question of fiscal reform? They had been told that one of the chief reasons why, in those foreign countries he had mentioned, they were so anxious to build up great and powerful trade unions, was that they desired to alter the fiscal system of their country, and they were pressing forward that alteration with all the power and influence and resource they possessed. They desired to alter their protectionist system, and to adopt a system like that in vogue in this country. If the leaders of the great labouring classes had been forced to the conclusion that protection gave them no relief, surely they ought not now to allow themselves to be jockeyed into accepting a system which would leave them in an infinitely worse position than they were in at the present time. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board had asked the House to co-operate with the Government in promoting schemes that would not drive other men out of employment. Personally, he was strongly in favour of a large scheme of afforestation to be undertaken under the auspices of the Government, and at the nation's expense. The problem of the unemployed was a national question, and it ought to be dealt with in a comprehensive way by the State. He recently addressed a large meeting at Barry, and he was told that in that town there were a large number of skilled workmen out of employment who were appealing to the municipality for relief. On the following night he addressed a meeting of the miners whom he represented. In the neighbourhood of the collieries where they worked there were barren hillsides, and he could not resist the conclusion that there at their own hands was a method for dealing with the problem of the unemployed in a very practical way. Throughout the United Kingdom, and in Wales in particular, enormous quantities of pit-wood were used, and that wood was imported from abroad. Why should not the barren hillsides be used for afforestation and the employment of the unemployed? Timber might be grown there, and a market would be found at the very door. The cost of transit would be saved. If Germany, Norway, and Sweden could undertake great schemes of afforestation and send their timber to Great Britain, paying all the cost of carriage, surely it was not impossible for us in the United Kingdom to promote such a scheme by using the waste lands in Wales and Scotland to grow the timber near to the collieries in order to supply the pits with wood, and to use the unemployed labour that was crying out for help. Unemployment occurred most in the winter months, and he was told that that was the time of year when timber could be best planted and grown. That, then, was the time of the year when the question of afforestation could be best faced, and he knew no man to whom he would sooner entrust the initiation of such a scheme than the President of the Local Government Board, who, by his sympathy and knowledge of the working classes, was admirably equipped for the supervision of such a State undertaking. If the Government could not find the money, then the House of Commons must bring pressure to bear for the purpose. He had often thought how pleasant it would be if they could do without money altogether. It appeared that money could not be found for great schemes affecting the social conditions of the people, while enormous expenditure was continued upon the Army and Navy. There were only two ways of finding the money for dealing with social problems. Expenditure must be reduced in certain directions, or taxation must be increased. The expenditure on the Army and Navy had increased from £40,376,000 in 1897–8 to £59,179,000 in 1907–8. What justification could there be for that enormous increase in days of peace? Surely the time had come when they might safely face the question of the reduction of expenditure on the Army and Navy. It was not many years since the late Lord Randolph Churchill resigned the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer as a protest against the expenditure on the Army and Navy of £31,000,000. We had entered into mutual arrangements with other nations, and, so far as he knew, there was not a cloud on the horizon. If ever there was a time when we could reduce expenditure to a peace footing it was now. He and his friends sincerely regretted that there was no direct reference to the question of unemployment in the King's Speech. He could only hope that the debate would bring home to the House of Commons, and to the mind of the President of the Local Government Board, that the problem called for a settlement which should be final, permanent, and successful.

* Mr. WEDGWOOD (Newcastle-under-Lyme) said he only intervened in the debate for the purpose of replying to some remarks that fell from the hon. Member for Preston. There was a good deal in the hon. Member's speech with which he absolutely agreed, but at the same time he thought that, even accepting the doctrines of *laissez faire*, the hon. Member did not carry them far enough. The hon. Member had shown with admirable clearness that the money spent on farm colonies, and sweeping the streets, involved a loss to the community as a whole. When the unemployed built a wall one day and pulled it down the next, the community as a whole lost by the process. That

was a side of the question which was too often lost sight of. It might, indeed, be possible to look upon the money so used as spent for educational purposes, because people were taught some new employment; and there was the question of keeping a man's head above water. But this was at best useless work, and the question was, could not productive and useful work be given instead of useless work. They would all agree that whether it came from the Government or ordinary sources it was infinitely better that productive work should be done than that useless and unproductive work should be found. He agreed with the Parliamentary Secretary that it was better to prevent unemployment than to cure it after it arose. He quoted "Britain for the British" to show how the productive workers supported not only the idlers but also the unproductive workers working uselessly for the idlers. There were two ways in which they could improve the condition of the productive workers, namely, by lightening the load put upon the productive workers and by increasing the number of the productive workers and the amount of the productive work. If a solution of the unemployed problem involved an increase of useless work, they were only making the position worse than it was before for the productive worker. What was productive work? It was nothing more than the application of labour to land. It was the working up of raw materials into shapes calculated to gratify human wants—getting land to cultivate or to build upon, clay to work up into cups and saucers, timber from forests for building purposes, coal from the earth to make fire wherewith to prepare our dinners. What was the best way to increase this productive work? It was to make it easier for labour to gain access to the raw materials, instead of allowing private owners to allow access to these raw materials entirely at their own will. He advocated a complete change in the present rating system. By the present rating system a man who did not use his land properly was let off his rates; if an owner left his houses empty and unused he was let off his rates. So that everybody who used his property badly was exempted from the burdens which other people had to bear, and thereby actually increased the burdens of those other people. What all land taxers wanted to do was to base the rates on unimproved land values instead of on buildings and improvements. That would force the raw materials into the market—give labour access to them—and the simultaneous reduction of taxation on improvements and buildings would make things cheaper and better for the community. In this way they would increase productive work and cure unemployment. He would conclude with a quotation from his leader Henry George—

> "Suppose when thousands are out of work and there are hard times everywhere, we could send a deputation to the High Court of Heaven to represent the misery on earth due to people not being able to find work. Why, what answer could we get? 'Are your lands all in use? Are your mines worked out? Are there no natural opportunities for the employment of labour?' What could we ask Him for that He has not given us already in abundance? He has given us the earth stocked with raw materials. He has given us the power to work up these raw materials into shapes calculated to satisfy our wants. If there seems to be scarcity, if there is want, if there are thousands walking the streets in search of employment is it not because what He intended for all has been made the private property of a few?"

MR. J. WARD (Stoke-on-Trent) said that the problem of unemployment was one of the most important questions which could be brought before the House. The hon. Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme had argued that the evil of unemployment could be met by new industries being brought into existence by the development of natural resources at present undeveloped. His contention was that that would not provide a solution for this question unless it were accompanied by some better means of organising labour than existed at the present time, when there was a chronic amount of surplus labour on the market. He believed that it had been worked out that that surplus labour in skilled trades amounted to 5 per cent., and in unskilled trades to four or five times that amount. The Federation of Trade Unions, of which the hon. Member for Jarrow was Chairman, appointed a sub-committee some time ago to inquire into the difficulties of unemployment, and after two years' investigation that sub-committee issued a very valuable report, which was worthy of the attention of politicians, because the trade unions had been obliged to take into consideration a question of this kind in a way which no other body had done. The Government of the country thought that they had done well in devoting something like £200,000 from the Exchequer for the purpose of meeting the distress caused by unemployment. The registered trade unions in the country numbered over 800, and they had expended £500 or £600 each per annum in relief of unemployment, which was a very considerable drain on their funds. The sub-committee he had referred to had arrived at conclusions which entirely controverted the position taken up by the hon. Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme. They believed that it was not necessary to create more labour, but that the problem was the better distribution of the labour already available. He believed that that was really the crux of the whole business. True, there were certain speculative political philosophers who thought that they could not organise industry under the competitive conditions which prevailed to-day without a certain proportion of unemployed labour being thrown on the market; but at any rate, trade unionists had come to the conclusion that the problem was not to provide more work but to distribute that which already existed. That was the answer which seemed such a peculiar conundrum to the hon. Member for Preston. Although machinery pushed a certain number of men into the streets workless, trade unionists did not condemn machinery. The hon. Member for Preston seemed to be on the point of grasping the fact that while machines were used for the purpose of cheapening the article which they produced, they were not used for the purpose of providing labour to the operatives. In other words, if machines produced by, the labour of eighty men, articles which had formerly given employment to 100 men, instead of the 100 men obtaining some advantage from the development of science and invention, it only cheapened the price of the article produced, and sent twenty men into the streets to starve or get work wherever they could. The report of the committee to which he had referred stated that as machinery advanced in any given trade, some automatic method should be devised by which, before the dismissal of workmen was involved, there should be a reduction of the hours of labour of all engaged. Trade unionists were not so fond of relief works as many supposed. They were only a painful necessity of the situation, and might be of some use to men who were starving, and those depending upon them. No permanent solution of the problem would be arrived at, therefore, until labour was organised in a sensible manner. Recently the proprietor of a certain boot factory in a provincial town decided that it was necessary to discharge twenty of his workmen. Then the employer's attention was drawn by a very clever and acute manager to the fact that it was only necessary to stop the machinery to meet the difficulty, the reduction of men having been suggested because there was a reduction of orders. The manager pointed out that it was only necessary to run the machines for so many minutes per day less than was previously the case to give all the men an opportunity of earning a living instead of dismissing any of them. So the employer called all his workmen together and submitted the question to them, and—he supposed it was because none of them knew who were the twenty men who would be dismissed,—they unanimously decided that the machinery should be stopped for a few minutes a day and that they should suffer a corresponding reduction in wage. By that means twenty odd men who would have been dismissed were enabled to get a living for themselves and their families. If they could only get that principle applied to industry generally, it would be a good thing, but unfortunately they had no means of regulating industry altogether. It was in private hands, and was conducted indiscriminately without any guidance at all, and unless the Government were to make very drastic proposals with regard to the regulation of factory life and industrial institutions generally, such a suggestion as the trade unions had made in their report would not be possible of adoption. One could, however, see in the proposals of the Government, especiaally in the Miners Eight Hours Bill, an indication of the direction in which the most conservative body of men would have to travel, and, like the coal miners who acted under the guidance of his hon. friend the Member for the Wansbeck Division of Northumberland, they were at last beginning to see that the reduction of the hours of labour was one of the best means of providing greater stability of employment to the men who were at work, quite apart from other advantages secured by short hours such as safety from accidents, etc., etc. There was one thing that the Government might well do. While they might not be able to interfere to regulate the stoppage of workmen in ordinary private employment, they might at least regulate their own departments. 7,000 men were dismissed at Woolwich and there was no attempt to regulate the hours made by the great Government department. Naturally the men would have objected to being placed on half time, but the mere fact that they were on half time, would probably suggest to some of them the idea of trying to get somewhere where they could be employed whole-time, and gradually they would have discharged themselves until such time as those who were left would come back to their ordinary normal average of wage. As he had said, 7,000 men had been dismissed from Woolwich, and the latest report was that, while they were there discussing how they could give employment to surplus labour and while they might expect the Government to do its best to regulate the work they had to perform, so that it might be distributed over as many hands as possible, there were some seven or eight hundred men in His Majesty's yards at Devonport working between two and three hours overtime. Was it not time that the Government set about putting their house in order? If, instead of dismissing men, they were to apply to Government work this principle of the regulation of hours to the requirements of the department, it would have a remarkable influence. It would be a great example to the private traders of the country to regulate their business in such a way that a reduction of the working time in factories could be effected in preference to the dismissal of men. That was their policy and it was one which throughout the discussion had not been stated. He had listened to every speech which had been delivered expecting the trade union position in regard to the restriction of hours to be clearly stated, but so far it had not been stated, and that was his excuse for encroaching upon the time of the House.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) said that every speaker who had spoken in the debate had either urged or admitted that the condition of unemployment was such as to call for the immediate attention of the Government. It was true that they had an Unemployed Workmen's Act, but it was admitted on all hands that the result of that Act had been neither satisfactory nor adequate. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board last year blamed the distress committees. He said they were incompetent and that very few had done their work well, and he included the Central Body in that condemnation. He thought that some of those committees submitted to the right hon. Gentleman schemes of which he did not approve, and it seemed to him that a portion of the blame might apply not unfairly to the right hon. Gentleman. If the right hon. Gentleman would not allow the committees to spend their grant in the way which they desired, why was he not good enough to suggest an alternative? Assuming that these committees were incompetent and insufficient, that very fact seemed to him only to lay a stronger obligation upon the Local Government Board. Let the House consider what the facts were. The Government came to the House and asked for a grant of £200,000. There were many of them who welcomed that grant mainly because it was a recognition that the making of some provision for the unemployed was a national duty. By that he meant not that the State might not use the local bodies, representative of each locality, nor, necessarily that the whole of the cost should be defrayed out of the National Exchequer, but that by encouragement and stimulation, by the exercise of control and regulation by the Government, any really necessitous area might be included, whilst on the other hand, this central control would be at all events some security against the creeping in of abuses. The case of the small holdings seemed to him to present an instructive instance. There, if the local authority was lax in providing small holdings, the State intervened. That was a case precisely in point, and it was a precedent which he thought might be definitely and thoroughly followed. He desired to refer to one class of institution which had recently been brought into existence. He meant labour exchanges. He believed that they were already doing some good, and he was sure that they might be made to play a very considerable part in working out, at all events, some mitigation of the evil of unemployment. He had said the evil of unemployment, but after all the real evil was not so much absolute unemployment as under employment. It was that men were not employed the whole time, and that we had adult half-timers and quarter-timers and that there was over a large area no continuity and no security of labour in the East End. Carmen, horse keepers, saw-mill labourers and many others got only from one to four days' work per week, and the railway companies were more and more becoming great offenders in this respect. He instanced the case of the London and North Western Railway Company which relied to a very large extent upon casual labour. They employed men not even by the day, but only for a few hours at a time. At their goods depôts they had what they called "a call." At six o'clock in the morning, eight o'clock, twelve o'clock, six p.m., and nine p.m., the men who were on their casual list were obliged to attend at each call on the chance of getting work. One man told him that he had attended all of the calls and received only 9s. in wages in the week. It seemed to him that this amount of under employment might be very considerably reduced. The railway companies were not all busy at the same time, and continuous employment might be given to a man by his being at one time with one company and at another time with another. Then there was the case of the master carmen. The superintendent of an employment exchange had told him that they were quite willing to entertain some co-operative plan such as he had indicated, by which the number of those whom they casually employed might be very considerably reduced. He thought the State, through a Government Department, might well apply itself to the organisation of labour upon these lines. The remedy was to make employment regular in a group of similar employers, so that a man was not tied to one of them alone. No doubt it might be said that the effect of making employment more regular for some people might be, at first at all events, to turn other casual employees out of employment altogether. Well, that was a result which he personally would be prepared to face. There was nothing more demoralising than casual employment, and it was far better that 500 men should be fully employed than that 1,000 should be employed only part of their time without any security that if employed to day they would be re-employed to-morrow. This organisation of labour could not, of course, stand alone. It would require to be supported by other schemes of which they had heard many discussed in that debate. As to the development of the labour colonies he thought that anyone who considered what had taken place at Hollesley Bay would acknowledge that the experiment had been on the whole encouraging. It was just on the financial point that Hollesley Bay had broken down. He noticed that the unemployed boards had recently issued an appeal to the public for funds in order to develop this part of their work, which would have the happy effect, not of sending those who had done well back into the abyss of unemployment in London, but of providing them with permanent employment upon the land. He also would make an appeal to the President of the Local Government Board. He did not know what the result of the appeal to private benevolence had been, but he did not suppose it had been adequate, and he submitted that the using of the Hollesley Bay Farm Colony for the purpose of training men and enabling them to earn their own living was an object that came well within the scope which Parliament entertained when the grant of £200,000 was made. He therefore respectfully asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he would apply some portion at all events of the residue of that sum to this purpose. This Parliament had been returned very deeply pledged on the question of unemployment. The enormous majority of those supporting the Government were so pledged, and no one rejoiced more than he did that the Government had already carried into law some measures, and would shortly propose others, designed to produce the effect, as he sincerely believed and devoutly hoped, of preventing to a large extent the growth of a new generation of unemployed and unemployable. They would support such schemes with energy and enthusiasm, but it would be idle to suggest that those schemes, admirable as they might be, would redeem the pledges given by the Members or satisfy the expectations which they had raised in the hearts of the people at the last general election for dealing with the problem of the unemployed. Those pledges would need a long time to bring to fruition, but in the meantime there was an enormous amount of unemployed in this country and he would ask the Government to apply their mind to this important question to which their attention must have been directed by the dictates, not only of policy, but humanity.

*MR. RIDSDALE (Brighton) said that this had perhaps been the most important debate, so far as the people of this country were concerned, that it had ever been his lot to take part in—the problem of how to deal with people who were anxious and willing to work but unable to get the opportunity of working, because the land from which they might, in a state of savagery, have wrung a livelihood, was held away from them, and because other property was in the hands of other people. Such a dreadful state of things so far as that individual was concerned could not help impressing itself upon the minds of all thinking persons. He quite agreed with one statement which he had heard made in the course of the evening—that this question of unemployment ought not to be a Party question. Yet he was sorry to say that he thought it was what gave vitality both to tariff reform and the views which were held by the Socialist Party. If it were not that there were some strong underlying truth of this nature he did not believe either of those policies could stand before the country for one moment. That being so, and the figure of unemployment, after a boom of trade where our imports and exports had passed the colossal total of £1,000,000,000 sterling, still standing at 6·1 per cent., there must be some yet undiscovered cause at the back of this very serious state of things. It behoved everybody to give their best abilities to getting a proper grasp of the subject. He had listened to the reasons given by the hon. Member opposite, and, although one of his reasons was socialistic he thoroughly agreed with it. He did think that one of the reasons of unemployment, though perhaps not the main reason, was the use of machinery. What was it that every business man sought to do? When he was met by competition, and even when he was not met by competition, for the sake of his own pocket he sought to cut down expenses and to get rid of expensive forms of labour. If he could he introduced labour-saving machinery. What did this mean but that an individual was turned adrift by an employer and his place was taken by machinery? He believed that that process was steadily going on throughout the country, but he did not believe it was the only, or even the main cause of unemployment. He admitted that labour-saving machinery displaced unskilled, probably, and some skilled labour, possibly; but ultimately, if not in a very little time, some other form of human want would absorb that labour to fulfil the wishes and demands of other persons. Therefore, though labour would change its vocation there would not be any real or permanent loss of labour. There would be temporary loss, as labour-saving machinery threw out the labourer, but as new human wants arose so would that surplus labour be reabsorbed. There was one factor necessary to the reabsorption of that labour, and that was that there should be the money to pay the labourer. He did not think any serious observer of the present condition of our financial affairs could fail to note that, not only was there a great deal of unemployment, but there was very little money about. The reason was, he believed, that for the last twenty years we had, not only in national, but also in local government, pursued a wasteful course of expenditure. We had run into debt and had not only added to our National Debt through the War, but had added millions to our local indebtedness. [AN HON. MEMBER: What about your aristocracy.] He did not see that our aristocracy had added to our debt, though he agreed with the Labour Party that possibly by means of the income-tax their unearned increments might be made use of to make up the deficiency. But that did not influence his argument. The point he was coming to was that local expenditure which in 1875 was £42,000,000, and which in 1894–5 had got to £70,000,000 odd, had in the year 1904–5 reached £143,000,000 odd. That was the local expenditure raised by rates in England and Wales alone, and if they added to it the increase that had taken place in our national expenditure they would see that the money that would have gone to employ the surplus labour pushed out by labour-saving machinery, was now being paid away to the Government and local authorities. The National Debt had enormously increased and the debt incurred by the local authorities of the United Kingdom was at present some £550,000,000. That was a huge sum; it was about five-sevenths of the National Debt; and only about one-half of it had been expended in enterprises that could be reasonably expected to make a return on the capital spent. The money that would go to pay the unemployed was being absorbed to pay the interest on that local debt and the interest on the money required by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. If there was at the present time one need more pressing than another it was that the control of local expenditure should be co-ordinated with that of national expenditure, and that one man responsible to the House of Commons should be able to control the money that was expended for either local or national purposes. After all, what was true of individuals was true of a nation. If a man and his wife were each to spend money irrespective of each other without any one of the two having control over the expenditure of both, they knew perfectly well the end would be bankruptcy, and if they allowed—as we were allowing—local authorities to spend money wherever they wished (except for the authority of the Local Government Board) without the consent of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, there could only be one end, and that was that employment instead of getting better would get markedly worse. He seriously commended to Members opposite who thought that in Socialism or in tariff reform they would get remedies for unemployment what was a very harsh, unpleasant, and he knew anything but a popular fact, viz., that the only real cure for this problem of unemployment was economy, economy, economy.

*MR. SNOWDEN (Blackburn) said there were two points in the speech of the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, but before referring to them he would just remark that he had been wondering why they had not heard an argument, which they had heard so frequently ten years ago, introduced into these debates; but a moment or two later the hon. Member had put forward that argument. It used to be regarded as an axiom of the Manchester school that machine invention created quite as much additional labour as it might actually displace. He believed that was true fifty, sixty, or eighty years ago. It was not true to-day. The truth of that was represented by the hard logical fact disclosed in the Report of the Home Office, that in every one of our manufacturing industries the number of people in proportion to the output was in every case getting less and less. He knew this himself, that in the most important of our industries, particularly the textile trades, the actual number of persons employed was less than it was at some former decade. The Lancashire trade in the last three or four years had been enjoying exceptional prosperity. The raw cotton handled was enormously greater than at any time in the last fifty years, yet there had been no increase whatever in the number of hands dealing with that larger volume of raw material. As regarded the second point, the hon. Member had drawn no distinction between the two forms of indebtedness—the municipal debt and the national debt. We had no assets in the national debt except the millions of graves in different parts of the world. In regard to the municipal debt, if the assets were not exactly reproductive they were indirectly reproductive. It was a misuse of terms to attempt to draw a parallel between the National Debt and the municipal debt. The municipal debt incurred for water works, a lighting system, or in sewering and paving, or works which conduced to the public health, increased the working capacity of the community which depended on its health. But a great part of the debt incurred by municipalities in recent years had been directly productive. Tramways, instead of increasing the municipal indebtedness, had afforded extra employment and had very considerably increased its volume. His hon. friend the mover of the Amendment had appealed to the Government to deal with this question like statesmen. He noticed that the appeal met with a very sympathetic response from the President of the Local Government Board, and particularly the Secretary to that Department. He had heard the speech of the Parliamentary Secretary, and he must confess to a disappointment that none of the expectations which he had entertained from the acceptance of that appeal had been responded to by him. He certainly could not share the eulogy passed upon the speech of the Parliamentary Secretary. He had heard a good many disappointing speeches from the Government Bench during the last few years, but he could not remember a speech which was so completely disappointing as was the speech of the Parliamentary Secretary. But before dealing with some points raised by that speech, he would first say that he had never heard a debate in that House where the standard of excellence had been sustained throughout at so high a point as in the debate of that afternoon. It was no detraction from that statement to say that on a few occasions he had felt as though some Members had taken too narrow a view of the problem. Some Members seemed to labour under the idea that the debate had been raised for the purpose of discussing the administration of the Unemployed Workmen Act and the distribution of the Unemployed Fund. He cared very little, if at all, about the administration of the Unemployed Fund or the distribution of the £200,000 or £300,000. He was concerned in not so much what had been done as what remained to be done, and which it was impossible for a measure of the character of the Unemployed Workmen Act to touch. Much of the discussion that afternoon appeared to him to have been founded on the assumption that this unemployed problem was merely a question of finding work for unskilled labour. He had not heard during the debate the question of skilled labour touched on at all. The hon. Member for North West Ham had said that he would not introduce sentiment into the debate, and had appealed to the Government for practical proposals. The hon. Gentleman had the courage of his convictions and had put forward his own proposals. They were three. First of all, as to riverside employment. It was a very desirable thing that riverside labour should be organised, but that organisation was not going to increase the amount of employment. It was going to give more employment to a certain number of men, but it was going to drive a number of men who were now getting a few days work out of the occupation into competition with men engaged in some other kind of work. They must dismiss that proposal as altogether ineffective to deal with the question about which they were all so anxious. The hon. Member's second point was, or he hoped at all events, that something might be done by the working of the Small Holdings Act. He would say no more upon that point than this. The hon. Member who spoke in that debate on behalf of the Irish Party had mentioned the fact that in his country something like three-quarters of the population were engaged on the land. Very much the same thing applied to Germany, where they had a population numbering about four millions directly or indirectly employed in the forests. Germany, though not to the same extent as Ireland, was more an agricultural country than England, but if so much was expected from the operation of the Small Holdings Act in this country, how was it that in Ireland, which was almost purely an agricultural country, within the last two or three generations the population had declined by something like 50 per cent.? How was it that in Germany where they had small holdings in operation to an extent that we in this country under the present system could not hope to rival within the next two or three generations, had, no less than we, an unemployed problem? The *Daily Telegraph* stated recently that there were 60,000 unemployed in Berlin. So much for the second proposal of the hon. Member. His third was emigration. The President of the Local Government Board, speaking something like twelve months ago in that House upon the unemployed question, mentioned that in the preceding twelve months 200,000 had left these shores. In the last ten years, 2,000,000 must have emigrated. Were they expecting that anything that House was likely to do under the provisions of the Unemployed Workmen Act would enable them to emigrate 200,000 a year? What was the effect of the emigration of 2,000,000 from this country in the last ten years in lessening unemployment? So much for the proposals of the hon. Member for West Ham. He would now turn to the speech made by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board, who appeared to be one of those who did not seem to realise the gravity of this question, for he had spoken of it as being merely a question of hard times. In answer to that argument he would like to quote an authority which the Parliamentary Secretary would readily accept as being much higher than his own. The President of the Local Government Board said upon this subject upon a previous occasion—

> "Whether there are 10,000 or 100,000 men does not affect, except in degree, the responsibility of society for meeting their demands."

In the very best times and during the relatively good times of the last few years there could never have been less than 250,000 men out of work. His point was that if there was only one man in this land willing and anxious to work and starving for want of work, that single man's case demanded the immediate attention of the House. This was not merely a question of bad times. The unemployed problem was part of the present system, and again he would venture to quote the authority of the right hon. Gentleman opposite. Speaking of the causes of the unemployed problem, the President of the Local Government Board said—

> "In fact the commercial classes must be told that to a great extent the existence of a great number of unemployed is due to the unrestricted competitive system in which production for profit by a class is carried on irrespective of the consequences to the community."

MR. JOHN BURNS: Hear, hear.

*MR. SNOWDEN said he was glad the right hon. Gentleman still held that economic faith. The Parliamentary Secretary further stated that he was not so anxious to apply palliatives as to get at the root causes. He also desired to get at the root causes. The hon. Gentleman put these causes under three heads: (1) migration from the country into the towns; (2) the drinking habits of the working classes; and (3) the want of technical education. With regard to the first, that was not a cause at all, it was only a result. One of the chief causes of the great influx from the country to the towns was the system of private landlordism. The second root cause put forward by the hon. Gentleman he approached with great hesitancy, because when one ventured to express heterodoxy on this question he was liable to be misunderstood. The point was that a considerable proportion of unemployment was due to drink. He would be very sorry indeed if any words of his could be construed as in any sense either a condonation or an encouragement of the unfortunate drinking habits of the working people. He seldom missed an opportunity of appealing to working men to give up drinking, because he recognised it as one of the greatest hindrances they had at the present moment in the way of progress. Drink destroyed physical health and fogged the brain, and the drink traffic he looked upon as being one of the greatest buttresses the privileged classes possessed.

With that explanation he wished to state that the drinking habits of the people, or rather the amount of working class incomes spent in drink, was not a cause of poverty but only a great aggravation of it. It might be the cause in individual cases, but the cause of poverty was an economic cause; and universal abstinence, although he agreed it was so desirable, would not materially affect the question of poverty at all. Again he appealed to the authority of the right hon. Gentleman, and he would quote words spoken in his other days. Upon a former occasion the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board said as to the relation between drink and poverty—

> "They lie in their teeth when they say that the unemployed are drunkards and improvident. I, a highly skilled mechanic, a teetotaller, a vegetarian, a non-smoker, a malthusian, have been without food for twenty-four hours. There stands my wife who has turned the ribbons of her bonnet over and over again in order to look respectable. I have been out of work for four months. If this is my fate, what must it be for men who are not mechanics and have got families to support?"

He would leave the two representatives of the Local Government Board to reconcile their own opinions. With regard to the third of the hon. Member's root causes, just as they increased the number qualified to do one particular kind of work, the probability was that the remuneration of that class of work would decline. Under present economic conditions the effect of technical education was to enable employers of labour to get skilled labour at the price of unskilled labour. Modern industrial tendency was in the direction of requiring, in the great majority of callings, less skill than formerly, and higher skill in the minority of cases. Let them apply all the root causes suggested by the Parliamentary Secretary and they had not touched at all the root cause of unemployment, which, as the President of the Local Government Board had said, was deep down in our capitalistic system. Upon this point John Stuart Mill said:—

> "The deep root of the evils which fill the industrial world is the subjection of labour to monopoly and the enormous share which the possessors of the instruments of production are able to *take* from the produce."

He thoroughly agreed with the hon. Member for Preston when he said that this was a question of poverty. Even old-age qensions was a question of poverty. He would venture to describe it also as a question of the unequal distribution of wealth. The hon. Member for Preston had said they could not increase wages without increasing the amount of the country's wealth. In his opinion, the root cause of unemployment was monopoly. It was a question of the standard of living and the purchasing power of money. He did not expect a solution of the unemployed question from one or from a hundred Acts of Parliament, but it was important to understand the nature of the problem to avoid by blunders aggravation of the situation. Any proposal which in its result would add to the amount of wealth at the disposal of the working-class population would increase the volume of employment. A time of bad trade followed a period of good trade, but the purchasing power of the people during the late period of good trade was less than it had been in preceding years. In the Lancashire weaving trade the rate of wages was the same as in 1859, the cost of living had increased, but there had been no corresponding increase in wages. The Board of Trade returns showed that in each year, from 1901 to 1905, the wages of the people went down, and yet during the whole time the cost of living was going up. Each succeeding year the workers were able to buy a less proportion of the production, and yet the production increased. No wonder, then, that in a short time we were confronted with that curious phenomenon of modern civilization, over-production — too much of cotton goods and men without shirts, too many boots and children with bare feet. It was really a question of under-consumption, not of over-production. It was not for himself and his hon. friends to put forward proposals to reform the present economic conditions. They were not the Executive Government of the country. The devising of the plan of campaign lay with the men who were paid for it. A right hon. Gentleman speaking from the front Opposition Bench had said that Socialists had never put their proposals into definite and practical forms. They were not there to defend Socialism. It was not Socialism but capitalism which was on its trial. It was for others to defend a system under which the men who did not work grew richer day by day, and the harder a man worked the poorer he was. Some reforms a Government might introduce and carry into law in a comparatively short time. The shortening of the hours of labour had been advocated as a means of increasing employment, but economic students had given up that point. The improved efficiency of workmen would in a short time bring up the output of the shorter to that of the longer day. He drew a distinction between productive and non-productive occupations. The shortening of the hours of labour on railways would require the employment of 100,000 additional men and have a far-reaching effect. It would reduce dividends, but it would increase the spending power of those engaged in the industry. It would not only add to the purchasing power of the 100,000 workers directly employed, but their increased purchasing power would stimulate other trades as well. So with the case of the mines and other industries ripe for public control. They could only increase the amount of employment, as the hon. Member for Preston said, by increasing the demand for labour and increasing consumption. He believed that public management of the railways would enable economies to be effected by which the cost of transit would be considerably reduced, and that would have its effect on every trade which used the railways. The thing to keep in mind was that they must effect a more equal and just distribution of wealth. They must carry out reforms which would add to the purchasing power of the people, for, after all, it was on their spending power that trade relied. He looked forward with considerable interest to the reply of the President of the Local Government Board. He hoped that, as in in the old days of the red flag, the right hon. Gentleman still had those gifts of statesmanship which were such a marked feature of his orations when he held a position of less responsibility and greater freedom. The Labour Party had sometimes found it necessary to criticize the actions of the right hon. Gentleman. They had been charged with being actuated by motives not quite creditable to their hearts and intentions. He wanted to deny that charge. It could be easily understood that their position in relation to the right hon. Gentleman was a very difficult one.

MR. JOHN BURNS: Hear, hear.

*MR. SNOWDEN said he wanted to assure the right hon. Gentleman that there was no part of that House that would be more highly gratified—more delighted—if the right hon. Gentleman's tenure of his responsible office should be signalized by a really valuable contribution to this question, which they all recognised to be exceedingly difficult.

MR. CHAPLIN (Surrey, Wimbledon): I thought that one of the measures by which the hardships and difficulties complained of in connection with unemployment would, to some extent, be mitigated, would have been mentioned in the Gracious Speech from the Throne. The views which I entertain in regard to the causes of unemployment, have been controverted by many speakers to-night, and I hope, as I am always anxious to defend in this House measures which I have maintained elsewhere, I may be permitted to make a few observations before we come to a decision. I should like to begin by saying that while I think there is probably no person in this House who sympathises more warmly than I do myself with the desire of the hon. Member who has just sat down, to relieve distress from non-employment, I am totally unable to agree with him in his description of the root cause of the evil of unemployment in this country. When the hon. Gentleman represents that the only means of dealing with this question is the equal and just distribution of wealth in this country, he is bound to show how that equal and just distribution is to be accomplished—how wealth legitimately belonging to one class is to be taken from them and put into the hands of others. On that crucial point the hon. Member had nothing to say. I share the surprise of other hon. Members that no mention of this evil is made in the gracious Speech from the Throne. Nothing is more painful to any right-thinking man or woman than the sufferings of those who, being perfectly willing and anxious to work, are unable to obtain employment. The hon. Member for West Ham who objected to work for the State being carried out by the inefficient and squeezed-out unemployed, went on with some inconsistency to recommend, amongst other things, that these unemployed should, if possible, be put back on the land. We are agreed on all sides, I believe, on that point, so long as it can be effected with fairness and justice to all, and with advantage to those it is expressly intended to benefit; but in my opinion there can be nothing more foolish than to look to this as a solution of the question. For the successful accomplishment of a policy like this certain conditions must be fulfilled. The localities chosen must be suitable both in their position and in the actual soil. There must be easy means of transport and a first-rate soil. With these conditions, provided the land were put into the hands of men who knew how to use it, the happiest results might be expected; but if they were not fulfilled, there would be great difficulties in the future. My experience is that where these conditions are found, the land is being used for the particular purpose at present. As to the proposal that employment should be provided by public authorities by mean of public works, I agree that if afforestation is carried out effectively it would be an admirable thing, but I would point out that employment is especially wanted during long frosts, and how is afforestation to be used with advantage with frost a foot deep in the ground? Then it was proposed that a new Department of the Local Government Board should be formed. If any Department is to be enlarged, I agree that there is none more entitled to it than the Local Government Board, seeing the enormous amount of work it has to do. It was again suggested that a solution is to be found, at all events so far as Ireland is concerned, in Home Rule. I am delighted to hear that if that is adopted the views I hold on tariff reform may be carried into effect in Ireland; but even if that temptation were held out to me, the hon. Gentleman who proposed this solution would not get the slightest support from me. Then there is the question of public ownership. That question has been most effectively dealt with by the Parliamentary Secretary when he said that whatever its merits it was not going to come along just yet. There remains then the question of tariff reform, and perhaps the same answer would be given to that. Upon that, for a moment my hopes were raised high to-night, because the Parliamentary Secretary for the Local Government Board said—

> "If I really believed that this was going to do good in regard to the question of unemployment and to provide more work for the workers of this country then I should be glad to adopt it."

I am not at all certain that we may not have some day a very distinguished recruit on this question—not now, no doubt, but after further study. For the moment however he will have nothing to do with it; he will not touch the accursed thing, because he has told us and because he believes, that in all the protected countries in the world the position of the workers is infinitely worse than it is here. But there is a good deal to be said on the other side, and I should like to ask whether the hon. Gentleman is acquainted with the Reports of the Moseley Commission and of the Gainsborough Commission. [Cries of "Who was Moseley" and "It was a Chamberlain Commission."] The great body of the members of that Commission, as hon. Members must be aware, were working-men of this country, selected by their brother working-men. [Cries of "No, no."] I remember one who is a Member of this House and is one of the Members for Manchester, a gentleman with whom I have been acquainted for years, and there was also the hon. Member for Glasgow. Nobody will deny that the drift of the Report is this, that notwithstanding the high prices in America the position of the working-men there is better than it is here. Of course I am speaking of a time before the financial crisis which has just happened. I did not intend to speak to-night, and therefore I am not armed with these Reports, but I understand, and until I am convinced to the contrary I shall continue to believe, that the members of the Moseley Commission were thoroughly representative of the working classes of this country. Now I come to another Commission — the Gainsborough Commission, and that I do happen to know something about because it came from my own county. That Commission was founded in this way. I will tell the House all I know on the subject. A gentleman who was at that time a candidate for Gainsborough and enormously interested in this question, made an offer to the working men of Gainsborough, in which place there are some of the largest and most successful agricultural implement manufacturers in the United Kingdom, to go and see for themselves the condition of the workers in Germany, and they readily said they were willing to go. The gentleman porposed to send them out and all expenses were to be paid for them, the workers were themselves to choose their own representatives exactly as they liked, and they did so. That Commission went out and they had every opportunity of comparing the position of workers in this country and that of the workers in Germany. That was only two or three years ago, not more than that, and the general result of their report was very far indeed from being unfavourable to the position of the workers in Germany, as compared with the workers in this country. At all events I think I have given some grounds which justify me in differing from the statement of the Secretary of the Local Government Board, that the workers in all protectionist countries are worse off than they are here. Then the hon. Member for Preston entered upon the scene and he said, "Does anybody in the world imagine that the condition of the working classes in this country can be improved by tariff reform?" Yes, sir, my answer is that there are such people; I am foolish enough to be one of them myself, and my views are shared by hundreds and thousands of people in this country and by hundreds and thousands of the working classes, and these opinions are growing from day to day, and week to week, and month to month all over the country. And why not? I will meet the hon. Member for Preston's question by asking him another question. Supposing as we believe is quite possible we obtain a far larger share of foreign markets than we have now, certainly a far larger share of colonial markets, in that event, who will tell me that these increased markets will not increase employment in England? We have not free trade, and to say that we have is the veriest rubbish that ever was talked. When my opponents talk to me about the blessings of free trade I ask them, as I asked the President of the Local Government Board the last time we had a discussion on this subject in this House, if I was incorrect in saying that not one considerable country in the world pursued the same system as ourselves. He said he would answer that later on, and as he did not refer to it he made it considerably later on. Can anyone suppose that, if we fail with foreign countries, we shall not obtain a far larger share of the markets of our Colonies than we enjoy at present? Who is going to tell me that if we get these increased manufactures we are not going to increase employment in England? The question will not bear examination for a moment. [Ironical cheers.] Not even by hon. Gentlemen on the other side who cheer so gleefully. Not one of them can deny that. If you do not get increased employment by increased markets why not shut up all the markets in the world? It will not bear examination for one moment except by one who is prepared to shut his eyes to the truth. If what I have been saying in connection with the Colonies is true, it is more than ever important to us, when you remember what the capacity of our Colonies is, not only to-day but more especially in the future, for taking goods from this country. Look at Canada alone. I remember Canada when the whole of that now fertile country was nothing but prairie, inhabited by Red Indians. The City of Winnipeg consisted of only eight wooden huts when I was there. It is now one of the largest cities in the world, and the whole of that great country through which I travelled is now devoted to growing corn. Canada has very great resources and no one can deny it. It has 160,000,000 acres of land, the finest and best land for corn growing to be found in any country in the world. It has timber to any extent, minerals, coal, and iron, and the precious metals besides. If you judge the progress of Canada and its advance in the future by that progress, there are no bounds to the markets which Canada might afford to the manufactures of this country. After all, we have come to the question put by my hon. friend the Member for Poplar to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board. "What are you going to do with the starving people now." It is not a very easy question to answer I admit. I heard every word of the speech of my right hon. friend the member for South Dublin and I agree with every word of it. I thought he made an extremely able and sympathetic speech in defence of the Act for which he is responsible. I have no proposal to make to-night except to agree with my right hon. friend. For the moment I do not think there is anything that even the most advanced person in this House, would say would be of immediate benefit to the persons who are unemployed, other than to urge upon the President of the Local Government Board whose sympathies are entirely with them, to do everything in his power within the limits of this Act, to give these poor people help and assistance always provided that in doing that, as my right hon. friend pointed out, you do not do more harm than good, by putting out of employment those who are already in work. All we can do is to urge upon him, to do everything in his power, to help and support these people, and if necessary, even to strengthen the Act, and in any course he may take in that direction, I can only tell him he will have no more cordial supporter than myself.

*MR. JOHN BURNS: There have been many times when I have been proud of being a Member of the House of Commons, but I do not believe that there has been an occasion on which I have felt more respect for this great institution and its Members than I do to-night, because we have had a debate extending from three o'clock this afternoon until this moment, in which sysmpathy has been blended with knowledge, and both with experience of one of the most delicate and complex problems that could engage the attention of the economist, the philosopher, or the statesman. I am particularly pleased that some of my friends below the gangway on the other side have made kindly and generous reference to myself which I reciprocate in the spirit in which they have been offered to me this evening, and in so doing, may I say that notwithstanding the kindness and the knowledge displayed in this debate, there has been revealed by every speaker this fact, that this is a question which if touched unscientifically, if dealt with in a way which has not a guiding policy and fixed principle, is likely to do more harm than good. And it is because I have believed that, and, if I may be allowed to say it, seen that fact two years before some hon. Members, who are now convinced of my prescience, that I have had to disagree with them, when I thought that the permanent interests of the unemployed and the permanent economic foothold of the working classes as a whole, were in danger of being jeopardised by mistaken critics, lachrymose appeals and unstatesmanlike palliatives. We have no right to approach a subject like this with a lack of precise information and clear thinking which the hon. Member for Leicester expressed a desire we should have. The hon. Member made one or two references to the condition of trade at this moment. I have no desire to mitigate the present condition of the labouring classes, but for the clear understanding of the problem it is essential to know how things stand and whether they are as bad as they are represented to be; and knowing how things stand in regard to the condition of the working classes, I am not disposed to take the pessimistic view of which some speakers in the debate have taken of the country's social and industrial position. This I do find—that the returns of the great trades of this country at this moment record the highest number of days work per week for which there is any statistical record. The wages of the five great groups of trade in this country have risen from 1900, the standard year, from 100 to 102. Our exports have jumped up from £408,000,000 in 1905 to £461,000,000 in 1906 and £518,000,000 in 1907, and our imports for the three years from £505,000,000 to £608,000,000, and to £646,000,000, whilst the railways, I am pleased to say have jumped from

100 to 104 since the standard year of 1900 to 1907. I mention this fact because the right hon. Member for East Worcester said that the question of the unemployed was getting more serious every day. That is not so. So far as unskilled labour is concerned, it has only recently come within the domain of public observation and sympathy, within the ken of municipalities and Parliament. Not many years ago, forty or fifty years ago, the unskilled labourer might work and live or starve and die, and no one heard a word about it, and to say it is getting more serious is to state what is contrary to the fact. Because there is the cheerful fact that there are from 50,000 to 70,000 fewer unskilled labourers per million of adult males than there were twenty years ago. Our sentiment is growing, our humanity is expanding with our knowledge as to the way in which to make those who are best off help those who are worst off. I am delighted at the progress of the unemployed movement in which for thirty years I have played a prominent, and I hope honourable part, and to see that the unskilled labourers now occupy that platform in public attention which the engineers, gas-fitters, carpenters, and bricklayers occupied thirty or forty years ago. Then I come to another suggestion of the right hon. Member for East Worcestershire that the non-productive labour of the country is increasing, but to me that argument has no force. I am not enamoured of dependents. But in the first place it denotes the growth of national wealth; secondly, from the moral and ethical point of view, it is pitiable to see six feet two inches of humanity employed as a footman, and put into a livery, rather than in digging trenches and planting trees. It is a waste of good material, and from that point of view it is regrettable. But that is not an argument for deploring the growth of unproductive labour. It is rather an argument against the non-rating of the luxury of six-feet-two in silk stockings and knee breeches at the expense of the widow with children going bare-footed. Then we are told that pauperism is mounting up, and all sorts of things are happening which really are not happening. What are the facts? Apart from trade, we find that taking the country as a whole, pauperism is lower to-day than it was a few years ago. It is true that pauperism in London shows a regrettable increase, and I had that fact in my mind when I gave exceptional treatment to certain London districts such as West Ham, Tottenham, and others, in the distribution of the unemployed fund. But pauperism in London will continue to grow so long as the unemployed movement is exploited by the type of person who comes to London not to seek employment, but to talk about unemployment, and to accept the philanthropic charity which is intended for more worthy people than themselves. When hon. Members below the gangway ask me to take action in this matter in the direction which some of them have indicated they ask me to do a thing which at the right time I shall not be disinclined to do, namely, prevent the streets of London being made, as they are too often made, places where for religious and political advertisement men are exposed who were originally good men out of work, but who have now got past the stage and might be termed the industrial residuum which makes the problem more difficult to deal with than it ought to be. I had the honour of going with my colleagues in the Cabinet to Buckingham Palace on the occasion of my first Court. I got away to my office where I doffed my Court dress and about one o'clock in the morning I thought I would take a walk among these people. I took my place in the long *queue* of 300 or 400 men who assemble nightly on the Thames Embankment. I mixed with these men for two or three hours, and I am glad to say that they did not recognise me as one who had come fresh from the Palace of His Majesty. I turned up the collar of my coat, pulled my " bowler " over my eyes, and looked as miserable as I could; and at the end of this long *queue* I, a Minister in receipt of £2,000 a year, held out my hand and received my quart of soup and my pound of bread. Was that a discriminating kind of charity? This City, indeed, is being shamefully exploited, and the movement is being damaged because these things are being done, not in our name, but in the name of sentiment often misplaced. The facilities for this kind

of thing are growing to the detriment of the genuine worker. When a man knows that this sort of thing is taking place—and how quickly it is known by means of the freemasonry and telepathy of casual life, can only be known by those who like myself have mixed with them—what kind of incentive can be held out to any sturdy vagrant getting probably 6d., 8d. or 9d. a day from certain sources, with a too indulgent wife or mother, which should prevent him from coming up to London and swelling the ranks of the unemployed? What is the kind of day's history in the life of such a man in search of a day's work? Between nine and ten in the morning he goes to Birdcage-walk and listens to the Minanola March of the Coldstream Guards. After this he walks across the park to Soho or Piccadilly and gets his luncheon at some one else's expense at a cheap restaurant, or from the broken food of a fashionable club. "What shall we do next?" is the question of one companion to another. "Oh, let us walk across the park and see old Burns go to the Levée." At five o'clock comes tea at a cabman's shelter for holding the horses; at ten o'clock there is not enough money for a lodging, but the night being fine this man and his companions elect to go to the Embankment and get soup and shelter irrespective of worth or need. This course of action is in my judgment a corroding of the *morale* of men who would have been all the better if kept from this kind of temptation. There is a provision in one of the Bills that will be brought before the House which I can only shortly describe as being "universal pauperism tempered by gaol," and it is, perhaps, a remedy for this kind of thing, but it would not please many of the people who are now talking about the unemployed. Another fact overstated in this debate is in respect of the extent to which pauperism prevails in this country. There has never been so much nonsense uttered about the subject as during the past three or four years. I remember Louise Michel, the great Communist leader, saying to me that if the Continental countries had our workhouse system, our infirmaries, our trade unions, and friendly societies there would be no Communist comrades for her to inspire. What are the facts? Out of 746,363 persons in the workhouses of England and Wales in July last there were only 6,914 able-bodied men in health. The suggestion has been made that free trade is a mistaken fiscal policy for this country, and that we are worse off than many other countries that have been named. I had the honour recently of going to Germany and to France to look into this question, and to see whether this country was either better or worse than they are. I can only find one difference between the German and the English workmen in appearance. The German workman, and he deserves credit for it, when he is out of work, puts on his Sunday clothes to go and look for employment. When the English workman is out of work, he stops in his work clothes, because he wants to get on to the job at once should he obtain it. Apart from that superficial difference, it is not true that the German workman is in any respect better off than, or as well off as his English compeer. If we are a dying race, with a vanishing trade and disappearing industries, what comes of these remarkable figures? I will take 1870, the boom year, and 1906 as tests of our progress or decay. What are these tests of decay? In 1870 our death rate was 22 per 1,000; to-day it is 15 per 1,000. In 1870 our pauperism was 46 per 1,000; it is now 25 per 1,000. In 1870 our able-bodied pauperism was 6.7; to-day it is only 2. In 1870 wheat was 56s. a quarter, to-day it is not more than 30s. Then take disease, poverty, overcrowding. On tuberculosis, the disease of poverty, the sympton of insufficiency of food, one of my officers has given to the public one of the most remarkable documents ever issued. In 1870 where 25 persons per 10,000 died from tuberculosis, 10 per 10,000 died in 1906. Where in 1870, £4 9s. was spent per head on drink, now only £3 16s. is spent. Crime has diminished, and savings have gone up. The hon. Member for Blackburn seems to think that wages have not risen, but all I can say is that, in my own trade, in 1870, the boom year, the figure was 155; in 1904 it was 190, and the figures for 1906–7 will, I believe, reveal nearly 200.

*MR. SNOWDEN said he had stated that in each year from 1901 to 1905, according to the Board of Trade Return, the aggregate wages of engineers showed a decline.

*MR. JOHN BURNS: If the hon. Member will take the admirable charts issued by the Board of Trade, known as the New Zealand Charts, he will find that I am right and that he is wrong. I will go to another test, namely, the length of life. In my own trade, the Amalgamated Society of Engineers fifty years ago had 110,000 members, whose average age at death in the year 1870 was thirty-eight; to-day their average age at death is fifty-four and a half, an enormous increase in that short period. And better still, the average age at death of our old superannuated members in twenty years has risen from sixty-seven years to seventy years in a short period. On all these tests, whether of wages, hours, house accommodation, moral or social well-being the argument is against those hon. Members who have taken a more melancholy view than the facts warrant. I now come to a more direct comparison between London and Berlin. We hear a great deal about Berlin being better than London. Taking the two capitals, the advantages are in favour of Berlin, because apart from its artistic appearance and its being a court centre, Berlin as everybody knows, is comparatively a new city of the last thirty or forty years; while this old London of ours has 1,000 years of continuous and in many ways glorious history. But just as a cathedral city reveals the largest number of public houses and the most poverty, so an old settlement like London must be handicapped. What are the facts? Berlin has 2,000,000 of population in round numbers, while London has 4,500,000. Berlin's 2,000,000 live in 26,400 houses, the 4,500,000 of London live in 571,000 houses. Where 180 persons live per acre in Berlin, their are sixty-two only in London. Where people live seventy-seven per house in Berlin, the number is less than eight per house in London. And in all the diseases that denote social stress and economic poverty London except in one particular is superior to Berlin. On every test whether of wages, disease, rent, or house accommodation, we find that London in every aspect is superior to the city that is often quoted against it, except in one respect, and that is measles. And why? German life is bureaucratised; you would not stand it here for five minutes. There is too much bureaucracy, method, routine and mistaken discipline in Berlin. Where 207 children in Berlin have measles, in London 366 have it. That is the only point where they beat us. Mark! In Berlin Fritz and Gretchen, when they leave home for school, put their little knapsacks on and go straight there, and when they leave after lessons are over, they go straight home. It is not so with an English boy or girl, brought up in an atmosphere of free trade conditions—freedom. What do they do? Why Tommy and Polly start out. Polly has sufficient initiative to get to school without her brother, and Tommy does not trouble much about his sister because he is convinced that she can look after herself, as I am glad to say my wife did this morning with the suffragettes. What happens? On the way to school the English Tommy and Polly make their way up to another boy and girl, and if Tommy has got a piece of toffy, and Polly has got an apple—they have more toffy and apples at cheaper prices in free trade London than they have in protected Berlin—what happens? They share the toffy and apple with each other. The apple goes round, and the result is that the standard of their generosity to each other is the measure of their infectivity. Let us come to the more crucial test, and that is pauperism. What do I find in Berlin from the official documents? The outdoor pauperism of Berlin in 1905 was 25 per 1,000, the indoor 8 per

1,000, and the insanes 3 per 1,000, or in all 36 per 1,000. In London the outdoor rate was 10·8 per 1,000, the indoor rate 16·5 per 1,000, and the insane 5·3 per 1,000 of population, including the 5,000 or 6,000 infectious patients of the Metropolitan Asylums Board, who are not paupers in the sense they would be described in Berlin. In all 32·6 per 1,000. I cannot understand how in the face of figures like these the arguments can be urged which have been advanced this evening. How, in face of those figures, can it be urged that the conditions in Berlin are better than in London? If Germany is the industrial paradise, the commercial elysium, that is represented, how is it that a Consular report relating to Bavaria shows that there are in that State 330 places where tramps can obtain shelter and food, and that in two labour colonies there are 8,472 workmen in distress, 5,920 of them being in Bavaria? In this one German State there are more able-bodied paupers than in the whole of this country. I do not wish to elaborate these comparisons, because I desire to see Germany better off than she is. She would then be a better customer to Britain. I do not want America to be worse off than we are, because to the extent they are superior, so is the measure of their trade with us. But how can it be said that these protected countries are better off than we are? In some of them there are squadrons of police hidden at the end of the streets, with clubs drawn, and with troops held in reserve. We have not got the 60,000 unemployed of some American cities, which can only reduce those numbers by approximating the fiscal policy of the country to ours, and adapting the bureaucracy of their institutions to the freedom and democratic character of which this House and the country is a model and example to the whole world. That brings me to the immediate point that I have stood up to address myself to, and that is the attitude of the Government upon the subject mentioned in the King's Speech to which hon. Members have referred. I make no complaint of the speech of the hon. Member for Leicester, but I wish sometimes that the hon. Member would make the same speech in the same tone on other occasions in other parts of the country. But sufficient for the day is the goodness thereof. The hon. Member now says that there has been a wonderful falling off on the part of the Local Government Board, and he asks what is the present attitude of the Government. The Government expressed their attitude on this subject in July, 1906, when they said that while the Poor Law Commission is sitting, which is specially entrusted to inquire into this question, it would be a mistake to amend the Act. [A LABOUR MEMBER: "What did you say in February in the same year?"] One argument of that kind is sufficient for me, and before I have done I think it will be too much for the hon. Member. One reason why we should not amend the Act has been supplied by the hon. Member for North West Ham and other hon. Members who have spoken, who have made quite contradictory suggestions and proposals which defeat each other. I expect the Report of this Commission about September. There has been no complaint received from any authority as to the amount of its grant, and £126,000 has been distributed on the best possible terms for the taxpayer. The distress committees without exception, all had balances; even the worst districts had liberal balances. I have not received from any responsible authority any suggestion that the Act should be altered while this Commission on the Poor Law is still sitting. On the other hand, strong arguments have been advanced in this discussion against such an alteration taking place. The hon. Member for Leicester has friends upon this Commission holding his own economic and

Socialist views whom he can safely trust. Surely he can entrust the Socialist views on the Commission to be looked after by Mrs. Webb or Mr. Lansbury, and the trade union view can be left to Mr. Chandler, an able trade union secretary, who enjoys the confidence of the Labour Members. Why should we at the moment when this Commission specially appointed is coming to the end of their labours, forestall and anticipate their conclusions? Let me ask the hon. Member for Leicester to bear with me a moment. He asks me to amend the Bill. What did he say in July, 1906? He said—

> "They might differ from Mr. Burns, but not on the broad principles. In his refusal to legislate by amending the existing Act and his proposal to deal with the unemployed administratively as well as in his criticism of relief works, so far as these criticisms went, Mr. Burns had their whole-hearted sympathy He was delighted that there was to be no amendment of the Act, and that the policy which had been adopted was to enable distress committees to carry on their work during the winter."

MR. RAMSAY MACDONALD. That was in 1906.

*MR. JOHN BURNS: There was greater need for that speech now than then. The hon. Member said in another speech—

> "I hold this point to be of the greatest importance for socialism. State interference under commercialism is strictly confined within limits. If we go beyond these our experiments will be failures and like the Paris workshops of 1848 will become bulwarks behind which reactionaries will shelter themselves. Public ownership, which, after all, is socialism, as distinguished from State interference, which is only the path to socialism must not be allowed to be damaged by this kind of thing."

He further said at York in 1903 that labour bureaux were an absolute failure. The proposal which is gaining most ground as a remedy for unemployment is the establishment of labour bureaux. On that point all the experts who have no practical knowledge of labour organisations are practically agreed. What do trade unionists think of labour bureaux and labour exchanges? The trade unionists call labour bureaux "blackleg" exchanges, rendezvous for cheap labour, the resorts of inefficient and unskilled workmen who hope to get wages that they are not entitled to receive and which they could not get except out of public funds. And on Tuesday last the town council of Leicester decided by twenty-four votes to nine against the member for Leicester's Bill as being useless where it is not dangerous, and as being a remedy that would be worse than the disease.

MR. RAMSAY MACDONALD: Is the right hon. Gentleman quoting the remark made by a private individual, or the opinion of the town council?

MR. JOHN BURNS: I am quoting from the Leicester *Daily Post* of yesterday which contains a report of the proceedings. Hon. Members must not be so hyper-sensitive. A remarkable statement was made by the mayor on January 28th with regard to the Government grant, and which disposes of the suggestion made of lack of sympathy. He said that the Local Government Board had allotted all the money asked for, including £30 in connection with the sanitary depot. I prefer in this matter to take the advice of the Association of Municipal Corporations and of the Leicester town council. I shall wait until I get the mature and clear cut views of the Poor Law Commission, and I am determined to act upon them whenever the opportunity arises. I come now to what the Government suggest pending the presentation of the report of the Royal Commission on the Poor Law. We suggest that the present Act should be continued in the meantime, and that I should continue, not to waste money but to give it to those districts that want it most. I think that is the wisest and best policy. In the meantime we can be getting our machinery ready in order to be able to act when the report arrives. I come to the statement made in the Amendment, and in the speech of the hon. Member for the Jarrow Division, as to the absence of any reference in the King's Speech to the question of the unemployed. I congratulate the hon. Member on his excellent speech. He said at Hull there were two important agencies tending to increase the difficulty of the unemployed problem. That is perfectly true in one case. The hon. Member said that one was the migration day by day of the peasantry from the rural districts into the towns, and that it ought to be attended to. The second point he mentioned was with respect to the displacement of labour by machinery. As an engineer I dispute that statement if he intends it to have general application.

MR. CURRAN: It has.

*MR. JOHN BURNS: I do not admit that, and what is more, the hon. Member will not tell the engineers of Jarrow that labour is being displaced by machinery. It is not true, because the fact is undoubted that the introduction of machinery has diminished the brutality of labour and it has lessened the burden of toil. If that were not so, would women and children be able to do by machinery work from which husbands, fathers and brothers have been displaced? And I wish to see machinery introduced even more rapidly than it has been hitherto, so that the work of those engaged in monotonous occupations shall be done by machinery altogether, and this will be for all labour a permanent boon. The hon. Member asked what there was in the King's Speech which would affect the question of the unemployed. I will deal with that question. I will take the Sessions of 1906 and 1907. The Government has a plan and a method which it is going to prosecute on the line of least resistance, without injury to anybody. Workmen's compensation has given to the workmen injured or disabled relief which, if he had not got it in that way, would have driven him into the workhouse or infirmary sooner. We have reduced the hours of labour in laundries. The Trade Disputes Act, whatever be its merits or defects, has given to the workmen in this country a jumping-off place from which he may obtain higher wages and better conditions of labour. And last, but not least, in the last Session we passed the Small Holdings Act, which ought to be called the Great Holdings Act, which will do something in the direction advocated by the hon. Member for Jarrow, in the way of anchoring to the land the workmen who now came from the country to compete with town artisans, and which, I hope, will do something to induce some of those now in the towns to return to the cultivation of the soil. Further, I trust that by the Housing Bill, which we hope to pass this session with the assent of all parties in the House, we shall supplement those industrial advantages created by the Small Holdings Act. [AN HON. MEMBER on the LABOUR BENCHES: What about the King's Speech?] Yes, the hon. Member asks "What about this year's King's Speech?" The hon. Member for Blackburn is to be congratulated on the speech which he delivered; it is the best speech I have heard from him in this House. The hon. Member laid great stress upon the hours of labour, and he gave importance to one of my old remedies which has recently been pushed to the rear by suggestions of municipal and State control of labour and the means of production. In the King's Speech there is the promise of "a Bill to Regulate the Hours of Underground Labour in Coal Mines." That will effect a reduction of the hours of coal miners working underground, who number

750,000. It is estimated that the effect of that will be to create a demand for a considerable number of men who are now unemployed. To go to the other end of the human scale, the Under-Secretary for the Home Department has decided to introduce a Bill dealing with the child vagrant—the child tramp. A better Bill than that cannot be imagined, because every vagrant child who is saved from the road cuts off the supply of the unemployable and the casual, and will be given that training which, under present conditions, he does not receive, and for lack of it he perishes. Then we are told to concentrate on the land. We have a Land Bill for Ireland, which, I hope, will arrest the migration of Galway, Clare, and Connaught labourers from their own country to compete with the workers in Liverpool, Glasgow, and Manchester. We have also a Land Bill for Scotland, by means of which the big, brawny fellows who go to Glasgow to supplant the Glasgow workmen will have an opportunity of staying in their own villages and cultivating the soil. And, better still, we have in the King's Speech the promise of old-age pensions for the aged poor who are without provision at the time when they cannot get work. That Bill which the people have asked for, and which the Government will carry, if hon. Members from all parts of the House support it, as I trust they will do, will enable about 1,000,000 people to obtain the relief which has been demanded for them. And then there is the Bill for the Port of London. Hon. Members may say, "What has that Bill got to do with the unemployed?" As one who knows the docks well, I believe that the Bill will do more to give employment to a large number of men at present unemployed than people imagine. The great dock strike which I had the honour to take part in was organised for the purpose of obtaining higher wages and more regular work for the dock labourers. Nothing pleased me more when going through the docks the other day than to find that the dock companies had kept their pledges made during the strike, and the treatment of the men is now much better than it was in the dark days from 1880 to 1889. So much for the measures promised in the King's Speech. But what is the Government doing administratively? Let me give one or two instances. A visit to the shelters and lodging-houses of London would show that from 15 to 30 per cent. of the inmates are men who had been with the colours and whose reserve period has not expired and who are unable to go to the Colonies whilst receiving their reserve pay. The Secretary of State for War and I talked this matter over, and we agreed that this was a condition of things that ought not to be allowed. We have done our best to provide one or two remedies to prevent it. The private soldier is to be better industrially educated during his service with the colours than he is now, and, while this will benefit him, it will not hurt labour. We thought it was a stupid blunder that an Army Reservist who could not get work at home should be debarred by the Army Act from going to any of the Colonies while he was in receipt of his Reserve pay, which might be five, six, or, as in the case of a guardsman, eight or nine years. So the Secretary of State for War slipped into a little Bill in July, 1906, a clause removing that disability. The result has been that, in fifteen months, 7,000 Army Reservists, time-expired men, have availed themselves of this privilege, and are now either in Toronto, Winnipeg, Vancouver, or elsewhere, instead of in lodging-house, casual ward, or on tramp.

Mr. RAWLINSON: Where would the men be in case of war?

*Mr. JOHN BURNS: Well, was there any more remarkable or creditable thing in the history of Tommy Atkins than that, when the South African War broke out, 97 per cent. of the reservists returned to the Colours from all parts, although a great many of them did not agree with the war? And then the Secretary of State for War has done another thing; he has decided that twenty battalions of militia recruits shall have their winter training when seasonable conditions prevail. I come to another matter. The General Post Office wanted in London 8,000 men as extra postmen and deliverers of letters at Christmas times. Previously these were selected from men who were otherwise engaged on night-shift work and in other ways, but we decided to alter that, and to give to him that hath not, rather than to him that hath. All these men were employed from four to six weeks, and instead of 20s. which they formerly received they were paid 24s. a week. And what was the type of men employed? They were not schoolmasters or Government clerks earning £100 to £150 a year; not retired superintendents of police on pensions of £120 to £150, and so on. These unemployed men included 1,505 painters; 1,261 labourers; 522 porters; 310 clerks; 99 handy-men; 162 carmen; 162 shop assistants; 2,057 miscellaneous; 161 paperhangers; 87 plumbers, and 135 carpenters. And what have we done about afforestation? I have been charged with returning £75,000 to the Treasury, but what has come of the money I returned? I returned it because it could not be wisely spent; and what did the Treasury do with it coincidently with my returning the money? I did not want it, the Committees did not ask for it, and I was not going to waste it. I therefore returned it to the Treasury and as fast as the Local Government Board returned the money the Treasury proceeded to release it, and it has been wisely expended on the purchase at a cost of £30,000 of 12,000 or 13,000 acres for State afforestation at Inverheven in Scotland. We have employed a distinguished official of the Indian Department of Forestry in connection with this step, which is the beginning of a school of State forestry which we are determined to develop. The Irish Government have appointed a committee to develop forestry, and we have tried to help forestry in the Black Country and elsewhere. I have enabled the Leeds corporation, through Government grants with the unemployed by supporting their experiment, to plant in three years 1,000,000 trees; and in other ways in coast erosion, on which £6,500 has been spent; in farm colonies and by prospecting work, accelerating currents and advancing loans here, there and everywhere we have put forward a good deal of work because we have a plan, a policy, a method, and an intention. It has been suggested that I have been niggardly to Hollesley Bay, but I can assure hon. Members that that is not true. I have never been asked anything in reason in regard to Hollesley Bay which I have not conceded. Hollesley Bay is an estate of 1,300 acres with a capital outlay of £43,000, an average annual expenditure of £25,000. and receipts from sales £4,000, so that you have £21,000 net expended upon an average of 250 men. This means an average cost per man of £84 per annum, including allowances to his wife and family, or 32s. per week per man at Hollesley Bay. There is no lack of generosity there and if you exclude the loan charges of £4,400 per annum it works out at 38s. per week for each bread-winner and dependents relieved. What has been the result? The results are not quite so good as I had hoped, but I will be patient and generous and persevere as long as it is possible. Of 1,037 men there, 157 have found work in towns, fifty-five have emigrated, twelve have migrated and eleven of the twelve were agricultural labourers before they went to Hollesley Bay. It cannot be said that I have been ungenerous to the West Ham Colony, as last year I gave it £25,000, and I hope the House will allow me to exercise my own discretion in dealing with the residue of the £200,000, which I propose to devote to districts which I will not name, because if I did, it would only attract the people whom we wish to repel. The Ockenden Colony is carried on at a gross cost for maintenance of £8,830. The sales are £814 and the new buildings have cost £8,586 which, without including the loan charges, £700, shows a net expenditure of £6,430. The average number of men is seventy-six and the gross cost per man is £94 and the net cost is £84 12s. And here is a remarkable fact. There is not one single instance up to date of a single man going back to the land notwithstanding this large expenditure. And yet in face of costly facts like these I am asked lightly to embark on an extension of such lavish schemes. It is not necessary for me to go into further details of the way in which we have dealt administratively with our work and it is needless in my judgment for me to labour the point that we do not intend as a Government to extend the area of pauperising employment, demoralising doles, and State and municipal industries competing with regular trades as happens at Hollesley and elsewhere. The time has arrived to cease adding to a vast amount of indiscriminate charity and pauperising relief and to concentrate our efforts on root remedies and bed-rock causes, with transient palliatives leading up to permanent reform, and hon. Members below the gangway can rest assured, if they will allow me, as to their credit they show a greater inclination to do than they did some time back, that I shall go on with this work on the safe and generous lines I have indicated. They can rely upon it that my sympathies with the unemployed are keener to-day, since I have risen from their ranks. I have always had a disinterested sympathy with the poor, and because I am in a position to help them I want to help them in such a way as will prevent them coming to the doss-house, the lodging-house—human advertisements for charity that ten or fifteen years hence we hope to be able to dispense with altogether. It is because I have a firmer grip on the unemployed question that I want no more State workshops and no more political expedients which will make the remedy worse than the disease. I believe the House trusts me in this matter, and I believe the country, as appears from the support I have received from it, also trusts me, as I am sure the best of the working classes do. I want faction eliminated from the performance of an economic duty and no partisanship to enter into the methods adopted by the Government. It is because I believe that what the Government have done and intend to do on the lines I have indicated is the best way of solving the unemployed problem that I ask the House to support the King's Speech and reject the Amendment.

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley) rose to move the adjournment of the debate, but

Mr. CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided:—Ayes, 318; Noes, 39. (Division List No. 1.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Adkins, W. Ryland D.
Agnew, George William
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)

Armitage, R.
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Atherley-Jones, L.
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Barry, Redmond J. (Tyrone, N.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, Hon. Hubert
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S. Geo.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bethell, Sir J. H. (Essex, Romf'rd
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Boland, John
Bottomley, Horatio
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brodie, H. C.
Bryce, J. Annan
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Chas.
Byles, William Pollard.
Cameron, Robert
Causton, Rt. Hn. Rich'd Knight
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Channing, Sir Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Churchill, Rt. Hon. Winston S.
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Clough, William
Clynes, J. R.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir W. J. (S. Pancras, W.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper G. J.
Corbett, C H (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Crooks, William
Crossley, William J.
Cullinan, J.
Curran, Peter Francis
Dalmeny, Lord
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dillon John
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Sir Francis (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Essex, R. W.
Esslemont, George Birnie
Farrell, James Patrick
Ferens, T. R.
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Findlay, Alexander
Freeman-Thomas, Freeman
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert Jn.
Glen-Coats, Sir T. (Renfrew, W.
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Sir Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Grayson, Albert Victor
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Rt. Hn. Sir W. Brampton
Gwynn, Stephen Lucius
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harmsworth, R. L. (Caithn'ss-sh
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harvey, W. E. (Derbyshire, N.E
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemmerde, Edward George
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson, J. M. (Aberdeen, W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Col. Sir Ivor (Mon., S.)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hodge, John
Hogan, Michael
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Holland, Sir William Henry
Holt, Richard Durning
Hope, W. Bateman (Somerset, N)
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Jacoby, Sir James Alfred
Jardine, Sir J.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
Kettle, Thomas Michael
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh A. (Donegal, W.)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lea, Hugh Cecil (St. Pancras, E.)
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J. M. (Falkirk B'ghs
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.
M‘Callum, John M.
M‘Crae, George
M‘Hugh, Patrick A.
M‘Kean, John
M‘Kenna, Rt. Hon. Reginald
M‘Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M‘Micking, Major G.
Mallet, Charles E.
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Micklem, Nathaniel
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Muldoon, John
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, N. J. (Kilkenny, S.)
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, Chas. N. (Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pearson, W. H. M. (Suffolk, Eye
Philipps, Col. Ivor (S'thampton)

Philipps, J. Wynford (Pembroke
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Phillips, John (Longford, S.)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Priestley, W.E.B. (Bradford, E.
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rendall, Athelstan
Richards, Thomas (W. Monmth
Richards, T.F. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Richardson, A.
Rickett, Sir J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robinson, S.
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Scott, A.H. (Ashton-under-Lyne
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Colonel
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Sherwell, Artuhr James
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smyth, Thomas F. (Leitrim, S.)
Snowden, P.
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Albert (Staffs., N.W.)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Tennant, Sir Edward (Salisbury
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thompson, J.W.H. (Somerset, E
Thorne, William
Tillett, Louis John
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Phillips
Verney, F. W
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Walsh, Stephen
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent
Wardle, George J.
Waring, Walter
Wason, Rt. Hn. E (Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, Henry A.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Whitbread, Howard
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York. E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, Llewelyn (Carmarth'n
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wood, T. M'Kinnon

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. Herbert Lewis.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Rt Hn. Sir Alex. F.
Balcarres, Lord
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Carlile, E. Hildred
Cave, George
Cavendish, Rt. Hon. Victor C.W.
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Coates, E. Feetham (Lewisham
Collings, Rt. Hn. J. (Birminghm
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Dalrymple, Viscount
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Fetherstonhaugh, Godfrey
Guinness, Walter Edward
Harrington, Timothy
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Hills, J. W.
Houston, Robert Paterson
Kimber, Sir Henry
Law, Andrew Bonar (Dulwich)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
M'Arthur, Charles
Morrison-Bell, Captain
Parker, Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Rawlinson, John Frederick Peel
Smith, F.E. (Liverpool, Walton)
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thomson, W. Mitchell-(Lanark)
Tuke, Sir John Batty

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. T. L. Corbett and Mr. Claude Hay.

Question put accordingly, "That those words be there added."

The House divided:—Ayes, 146; Noes, 195. (Division List No. 2.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Balcarres, Lord
Barnard, E. B.
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.)
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beaumont, Hon. Hubert
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bell, Richard
Boland, John
Bottomley, Horatio
Bowerman, C. W.
Boyle, Sir Edward
Brace, William
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Burke, E. Haviland
Byles, William Pollard
Carlile, E. Hildred
Cave, George
Clynes, J. R.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collings, Rt. Hn. J. (Birminghm)
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper, G. J.

Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Cowan, W. H.
Crooks, William
Cullinan, J.
Curran, Peter Francis
Dalrymple, Viscount
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Farrell, James Patrick
Fetherstonhaugh, Godfrey
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Gill, A. H.
Glover, Thomas
Grayson, Albert Victor
Gwynn, Stephen Lucius
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harrington, Timothy
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Harvey, W. E. (Derbyshire, N.E
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hemmerde, Edward George
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hills, J. W.
Hodge, John
Hogan, Michael
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hudson, Walter
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jordan, Jeremiah
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kelley, George D.
Kettle, Thomas Michael
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Law, Hugh A. (Donegal, W.)
Lea, Hugh Cecil (St. Pancras, E.
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.)
M'Arthur, Charles
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
Markham, Arthur Basil
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Mooney, J. J.
Morrison-Bell, Captain
Muldoon, John
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, N. J. (Kilkenny, S.)
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nicholls, George
Nolan, Joseph
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid.
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Parker, Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Parker, James (Halifax)
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Phillips, John (Longford, S.)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'th
Richards, T.F. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Richardson, A.
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Scott, A.H. (Ashton-under-Lyne
Seddon, J.
Shackleton, David James
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Smith, F.E. (Liverpool, Walton)
Smyth, Thomas F. (Leitrim, S.)
Snowden, P.
Stanley, Albert (Staffs., N.W.)
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Thomson, W. Mitchell-(Lanark)
Thorne, William
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Walsh, Stehpen
Ward, John (Stoke-upon-Trent)
Wardle, George J.
Watt, Henry A.
Wedgwood, Josiah G.
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. George Roberts and Mr. Charles Duncan.

NOES.

Adkins, W. Ryland D.
Agnew, George William
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Armitage, R.
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Atherley-Jones, L.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Baring, Capt. Hn. G (Winchester)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, Redmond J. (Tyrone, N.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S. Geo.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bethell, Sir J.H. (Essex, Romf'rd
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brodie, H. C.
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bryce, J. Annan
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Cameron, Robert
Causton, Rt. Hn. Richard Knight
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Channing, Sir Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Churchill, Rt. Hon. Winston S.
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Clough, William
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras, W
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, C.H. (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cox, Harold
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Crossley, William J.
Dalmeny, Lord
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Duckworth, James
Edwards, Sir Francis (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Essex, R. W.
Esslemont, George Birnie
Ferens, T. R.
Findlay, Alexander
Freeman-Thomas, Freeman
Fuller, John Michael F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Glen-Coats, Sir T. (Renfrew, W.
Goddard, Sir Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Guinness, Walter Edward
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Rt Hn. Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harmsworth, R.L. (Caithn'ss-sh.
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.

Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, J. M. (Aberdeen, W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Col. Sir Ivor (Mon., S.)
Hobart, Sir Robert
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Holland, Sir William Henry
Holt, Richard Durning
Hope, W. Bateman (Somerset, N.
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Jacoby, Sir James Alfred
Jardine, Sir J.
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington)
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald, J. M. (Falkirk Bg'hs)
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Rt. Hon. Reginald
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Micking, Major G.
Mallet, Charles E.
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Micklem, Nathaniel
Montagu, E. S.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholson, Charles N. (Donc'st'r
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nuttall, Harry
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pearson, W. H. M. (Suffolk, Eye
Philipps, J. Wynford (Pembroke
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central
Priestley, W. E. B. (Bradford, E
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rawlinson, John Frederick Peel
Rickett, Sir J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robinson, S.
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seely, Colonel
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick, B.)
Sherwell, Arthur James
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Stanger, H. Y.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Tennant, Sir Edward (Salisbury
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Thompson, J. W. H. (Somerset, E
Tillett, Louis John
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Verney, F. W.
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Waring, Walter
Wason, Rt. Hn. E. (Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Waterlow, D. S.
Whitbread, Howard
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, Llewelyn (Carm'rth'n
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wood, T. M'Kinnon

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. Herbert Lewis.

Main Question again proposed.

And, it being after Eleven of the Clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

On the Motion for the adjournment of the House—

MR. SNOWDEN (Blackburn) asked the Home Secretary whether he was aware that a number of women had been arrested that morning for disturbances at the houses of Cabinet Ministers and had since been sent to prison as second-class. Could they not be made first-class prisoners instead of second-class? It was he said a cruel thing to put them in the second-class.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): My only knowledge of the circumstances is obtained from the newspapers. I prefer not to give a definite Answer on that information, but I may remind the hon. Member that the matter is in the discretion of the magistrates.

MR. GRAYSON (Yorkshire, W.R., Colne Valley) reminded the right hon. Gentleman that there were other women in prison connected with the disturbance in Downing Street. Was it not possible to make the imprisonment for a political offence first-class instead of second-class?

MR. GLADSTONE: I see no reason to interfere in the case referred to.

Adjourned at sixteen minutes after Eleven o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 31*st January*, 1908.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, through continued indisposition, from this day's Sitting.

Whereupon Mr. EMMOTT, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS].

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in respect of the Bills comprised in the List reported by the Chairman of Ways and Means as intended to originate in the House of Lords, they have certified that the Standing Orders have been complied with in the following cases, viz. :—

Aire and Calder Navigation.

Ammanford Urban District Council Water.

Argentine North-Eastern Railway.

Audenshaw and Saddleworth Urban District Councils.

Barry Railway.

Bognor Gas Light and Coke Company.

Bristol Corporation.

Bristol Tramways.

Briton Ferry Urban District Council.

Camberwell and other Metropolitan Borough Councils (Superannuation).

Cardiff Railway.

Commercial Union Assurance Company.

Crystal Palace Company.

Fine Art and General Insurance Company.

Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours.

Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway.

Great Western Railway.

Great Western Railway (Superannuation Scheme).

Herne Bay Pier.

Highgate Hill Tramways.

Huddersfield Water.

Keighley Corporation.

King's College, London (Transfer).

Law Guarantee Trust and Accident, and United Legal Indemnity Insurance Societies.

Llanelly and Burry Port Water Board.

Llanelly Gas.

London and District Electricity Supply.

London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway.

London Electric Supply.

London Motor Roadways Approach.

London (Westminster and Kensington) Electric Supply Companies.

Magee Presbyterian College, Londonderry.

Merthyr Tydfil Corporation.

Metropolitan District Railway.

Metropolitan Electric Tramways.

Monmouthshire County Council.

Northern Assurance Company.

Norwich Union Fire Insurance Society.

Pontypridd Water.

Ravensthorpe Urban District Council.

Rhymney and Aber Valleys Gas and Water.

Rhymney Railway.

Rochester Bridge.

St. Marylebone Borough Council (Superannuation).

Skegness Urban District Council.

South Wales Electrical Power Distribution.

Swansea Valley Gas.

Taff Vale Railway.

Upton Town Hall.

Wath-upon-Dearne Urban District Council Gas.

And they have certified that the Standing Orders have not been complied with in the following cases, viz :—

Bristol Docks.

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements).

Malvern Hills.

Stratford-upon-Avon, Towcester, and Midland Junction, Evesham, Redditch, and Stratford-upon-Avon Junction, and East and West Junction Railways (Amalgamation).

Thames River Steamboat Service Act (1904) Amendment.

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Deputy-Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petitions for the following Bills, originating in the Lords, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—Bristol Docks [Lords] ; London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) [Lords] ; Malvern Hills [Lords] ; Stratford-upon-Avon, Towcester, and Midland Junction, Evesham, Redditch, and Stratford-upon-Avon Junction, and East and West Junction Railways (Amalgamation) [Lords] ; Thames River Steamboat Service Act (1904) Amendment [Lords].

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Deputy-Speaker laid upon the Table Reports from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the cases of the Petitions for the following Bills, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—Dover Graving Docks ; Lower Thames (Grays) Dock.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

PETITIONS.

LICENSED PREMISES (EXCLUSION OF CHILDREN.

Petitions for legislation : from Bacup ; Beccles ; Bedford ; Bethnal Green ; Blackpool ; Bluntisham ; Bootle ; Bridlington ; Bristol ; Bungay ; Burslem ; Catford ; Cheetham ; Children's Protection League ; Cleator Moor ; Cockermouth ; Colchester ; Cowley ; Dawley , Dewsbury ; Droylsden ; Egremont (two) ; Filey ; Flamborough ; Gateshead ; Gorleston ; Goole ; Helmshore ; Heswall ; Hither Green ; Horley ; Houghton le Spring ; Hoylake ; Hungerford ; Keighley ; Kendal ; Kidderminster ; Lambeth ; Lancaster ; Leicester ; Leominster ; Lincoln ; Liscard (four) ; Liskeard ; Liverpool (five) ; Lutterworth ; Lytham ; Manchester ; Market Harborough ; Moston ; Moseley and King's Heath ; Neston ; Newport ; Norwood and Wandsworth ; Nottingham ; Oakengates (two) ; Oakworth ; Openshaw ; Port Sunlight ; Prenton ; Princetown ; Redhill ; Reigate ; Rillington ; St. Annes on the Sea ; Salisbury ; Saltley ; Seacombe ; Shrewsbury ; Skipton ; Southend on Sea ; Stepney ; Swinton ; Taunton ; Tipton ; Walkden ; Wallasey (two) ; Waterfoot ; Wednesbury ; West Gorton ; West Ham ; West Kirby ; West Norwood ; Worsley ; and Wyke Regis ; to lie upon the Table.

PACK LICENSES ON PLEASURE STEAMERS.

Petition from Worcester, for alteration of Law ; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY.

Petitions for legislation, from London ; Shipston-on-Stour ; Southampton ; and Stafford ; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

COMPULSORY NATIVE LABOUR (COLONIES).

Return [presented 29th January] to be printed. [No. 20.]

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY OF WEST SUFFOLK).

Copy presented, of Order made by the County Council of West Suffolk, renaming the Bradford St. George Polling District the Rougham Polling District [by Act] ; to lie upon the Table.

CIVIL CONTINGENCIES FUND 1906-7.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 30th January ; *Mr. Runciman*] ;

to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 21.]

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (IRELAND).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 30th January; *Mr. Runciman*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 22.]

ALDERNEY MAIL SERVICE.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 30th January; *Mr. Runciman*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 23.]

WEST INDIAN INTER-COLONIAL MAIL SERVICE.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 30th January; *Mr. Runciman*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 24.]

COUNTY COURTS (ENGLAND) (FEES).

Copy presented, of Treasury Order, dated 17th January, 1908, regulating Fees in County Courts [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE AND NAVIGATION.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 30th January; *Mr. Lloyd-George*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed [No. 25.]

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Bank of England, Accounts of Exchequer Bills and other Government Securities purchased, and Amount of Balances of Sums issued for the Payment of Dividends, &c., for the year ending 5th January, 1908 [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 26.]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Russia and the Brussels Sugar Convention.

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can now explain the conditions under which the Russian Government is prepared to adhere to the Brussels Sugar Convention; and whether His Majesty's Government have assented to any stipulations intended to restrict the importation of sugar into the United Kingdom.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Grey.*) Russia is to be permitted to maintain her present fiscal and customs legislation on the subject of sugar, and is not to increase the advantages which producers might derive from the maximum sale price fixed for the home market. She also undertakes not to authorise the exportation, with the exemption from or remission of excise, of sugar exceeding a total of 1,000,000 tons in the period of six years from the 1st September last; but this engagement does not apply to exports to Finland, to Persia by land or by the Caspian Sea, and to Russia's other neighbours in Asia by land, with the exception of Turkey in Asia. The assent of His Majesty's Government has only been given to the provisions of the Protocol allowing Russia to adhere to the Convention, and does not imply assent to any of the stipulations tending to restrict the exportation of Russian sugar. Papers on the subject will be presented to-morrow. His Majesty's Government are freed from any obligation to prohibit, or restrict, or penalise in any way the importation of sugar into the United Kingdom from whatever source it may be derived.

Railway Companies and Conveyance of Goods by Passenger Trains.

SIR MAURICE LEVY (Leicestershire, Loughborough): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the fact that several railway companies have recently curtailed the hours during which they collect and deliver goods conveyed by passenger trains, thereby imposing upon traders the necessity of carting part of their own traffic; and whether he proposes to take any steps to prevent these railway companies thus indirectly raising the charges to traders of goods conveyed by passenger train.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) My attention has not been called to this matter, but if my hon. friend will furnish me with particulars of the alterations to which he refers I will consider whether I can usefully communicate with the companies concerned. The collection and delivery of goods are not services which railway companies are under any statutory obligation to perform.

Cattle-Driving in Ireland.

Mr. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state how many persons were put on their trial before common juries on charges connected with cattle-driving at the Summer Assizes of 1907, at the Michaelmas Sittings in the Court of King's Bench in Dublin, and at the Winter Assizes, respectively; how many convictions were obtained; how many acquittals; and how many disagreements of juries.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The numbers of persons put on trial for offences connected with cattle-driving were as follows: At the Summer Assizes of 1907, 12; in the King's Bench Division, 64; and at the Winter Assizes, 60; total 136. Five persons were convicted, 27 were acquitted, and the juries disagreed as regards the remaining 104 persons.

Outrages with Firearms in Ireland.

Mr. LONSDALE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the number of outrages with firearms reported by the Royal Irish Constabulary during the six months ended 31st December, and the number of arrests made in connection therewith.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The total number of cases was 63, and the number of arrests 35.

Exchequer Contributions under the Irish Labourers Act.

Mr. LONSDALE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that in consequence of the new method of distributing the Exchequer Contribution, introduced by the Labourers Act of 1906, the amount available for the counties in Ulster has been reduced from £12,408 in 1904–5 to £2,734 in 1906–7, representing a loss to these counties of £9,674 per annum; whereas the share of Leinster and Munster in the Exchequer Contribution has been increased by £2,552 and £4,491 per annum respectively; and whether, in view of the large number of applications received by the district councils in Ulster for labourers' cottages and additional allotments, and the difficulty of acceding to them without increasing considerably the amount of local rates, he will introduce proposals for a more equitable distribution of this fund.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) This Question appears to have been framed under a misconception, and the figures quoted give a misleading idea of the general effect of the Act of 1906. I would refer the hon. Member to my Answer to the Question of the hon. Member for East Down on the 10th April, 1907,† when I explained the equitable principle of distribution adopted by the Act of 1906. The actual sums which each province will in future receive from Government funds will depend entirely upon the extent to which the Act is put in force in each district.

Cattle-Driving in Ireland.

Mr. LONSDALE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the number of persons against whom proceedings have been instituted by the police for offences connected with cattle-driving, during the twelve months ended 31st December last, and specify the results of such proceedings.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) Proceedings were taken against 572 persons, with the following results—

Number of persons ordered to find bail to keep the peace - - - -	288
Number discharged - -	32
Number against whom informations were refused	76
Number in respect of whom proceedings are pending	40
Number dealt with on indictment (of whom five were convicted, twenty-seven acquitted, and as regards the remaining 104 the jury disagreed) -	136
Total -	572

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† See (4) *Debates*, clxxii., 218.

MR. LONSDALE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the number of cases of cattle-driving reported to the Royal Irish Constabulary, or otherwise within their cognisance, during the year ended 31st December last, the number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted, and the number of convictions obtained.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The number of cases of cattle-driving during the year 1907 was 381. Proceedings were instituted in respect of eighty-one of these. In a number of instances, however, the same persons were concerned in two or more cases of cattle-driving on the same occasion, and such cases therefore formed the subject of a single proceeding. The number of separate cases of proceedings was forty-eight. There was a conviction in one case, and in twenty-seven cases the defendants were ordered to find sureties to keep the peace.

Agrarian Outrage in Ireland.

MR. LONSDALE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the total number of agrarian outrages reported to the Royal Irish Constabulary during the twelve months ended 31st December last; the number of cases in which arrests were made or proceedings taken; and the number of cases in which convictions were obtained.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The number of agrarian outrages reported during the year ending 31st December, 1907, was 372, which includes 182 threatening letters or notices. Proceedings were taken by arrest or otherwise in forty-two cases. Convictions have been obtained in five of these cases, and in twelve cases the proceedings are pending.

Dismissal of Constable Weir, Royal Irish Constabulary.

MR. MOORE (Armagh, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that Constable Weir, after eighteen years service in the Royal Irish Constabulary without an unfavourable record, was recently dismissed from the force for absence without leave for ten minutes on a matter of extreme personal urgency connected with the illness of his wife; whether no complaint was made against this constable for nearly three weeks after the alleged offence; if he will state by whom such complaint was made and by whom it was inquired into; and whether the document dismissing this constable was signed by the Chief Secretary or by Sir Antony MacDonnell.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) Constable Weir, who had seventeen and a half years' service, was dismissed from the force for having absented himself from the vicinity of his barracks in contravention of his officers' express orders. It is not the fact that there was no unfavourable record against him. Constable Weir's misconduct was reported on the day on which it occurred. The complaint was made by the district inspector. No formal inquiry was necessary, seeing that the constable admitted the offence.

Constabulary Inquiry at Tullow.

MR. MOORE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state what was the result of the recent inquiry held by the constabulary authorities at Tullow, in the county of Clare, into the conduct of certain members of the Royal Irish Constabulary; and what charges at such inquiry were established by evidence.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) At a constabulary court of inquiry held at Tulla, county Clare, on the 8th November, 1907, and following days, certain charges were preferred against six constables attached to the Broadford station, and other charges were preferred against the head constable and sergeant of that station. The six constables were found guilty of the charges brought against them, and were, by order of the Lord-Lieutenant, dismissed from the force. The head constable and sergeant were acquitted. The charges against the constables were fully established, and the Inspector-General concurred in the finding of the court.

The Office of Ulster King at Arms.

MR. MOORE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if the chairman or other members of the Commission recently appointed to inquire into certain responsibilities of Sir Arthur

Vicars, Ulster King at Arms, were informed before their inquiry commenced that the Lord-Lieutenant had offered the reversion of Sir Arthur Vicars' office to two persons.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The facts are as follows. Towards the end of last October it was decided, with the approval of the Crown, that the Office of Arms at Dublin must be reconstituted. This involved the retirement of the principal members of the staff, who were officially notified accordingly, but Sir Arthur Vicars declined to resign his office. The Lord-Lieutenant was anxious to give ample time, and the matter was allowed to stand over until the beginning of December, when Sir Arthur Vicars was officially informed that his tenure of office would be brought to an end without further delay. It was only then that the Lord-Lieutenant caused certain persons to be asked if they would be prepared to accept the position of Ulster King at Arms if it were offered to them. The reply in each case was in the negative, but the reasons given had no reference to Sir Arthur Vicars. At this time the Commission of Inquiry, which was subsequently appointed in consequence of a petition from the Knights of the Order of Saint Patrick, had not been contemplated. As soon as the Commission was decided upon, and during its proceedings, no further steps were taken regarding the position of Ulster. The Commission reported on the 25th January, and the appointment of a successor to Sir Arthur Vicars will be gazetted at once. The fact that, before the Commission was formed, persons were approached regarding the appointment of Ulster King at Arms was not mentioned to the chairman or other members of the Commission. That circumstance had no connection with the object and scope of the inquiry.

Publication of Report of the Congested Districts Board.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland when he expects the Report of the Congested Districts Commissioners to be ready for publication.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I am not in a position to name a date; but I shall be disappointed if the Report is not received by the end of March.

Royal Irish Constabulary Recruits.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many recruits have been enrolled in the Royal Irish Constabulary since 15th August last.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The number is 807.

The Brussels Sugar Convention.

Sir CHARLES DILKE: To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether His Majesty's Government propose to make any statement with reference to the Brussels Sugar Convention, and to afford an opportunity for discussing the additional Act before ratification.

(*Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*) The additional Act is in accordance with the intentions of His Majesty's Government, as stated in Parliament on 6th June last, and they have promised to deposit the ratification at Brussels by whatever date is necessary. The date fixed originally was 1st February, and, unless it is postponed by consent, the ratification must be deposited by then. There will, of course, be the usual opportunities for discussing the Act if desired, but it is impossible to promise one before ratification.

Cost of Extra Police in Disaffected Districts in Ireland.

Mr. GUINNESS (Bury St. Edmunds): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the approximate cost of extra police drafted into disturbed districts under the Act of King William IV., which was put into operation in August last, and also the cost of extra forces sent from the reserve of the Royal Irish Constabulary for duty in the disturbed districts; whether any arrests have been made for cattle-driving at Thomastown, Kells, at Walterstown, and at Staffordstown, county Meath, on 8th September last; and whether official notification was given to the police authorities, or whether the parties were unwilling to incur displeasure by reporting them.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The following sums have been claimed from county councils in respect of the half-year ending 30th September, 1907:—For extra police appointed under the Act, William IV., c. 13, s. 13, £890 8s. 3d., and for the services of reserve force £2,760 4s. 3d. The accounts for the half-year which will end on 31st March, 1908, cannot be prepared until the conclusion of the period, but the approximate total charge under both heads for the four months to 31st January is £3,800. The particular cases of cattle-driving referred to in the latter part of the Question cannot be identified at headquarters from the information given, but the police authorities will make inquiries on the subject with the object of obtaining the information asked for.

NEW WRIT.

New Writ for the County of Glamorgan (Mid Division), in the room of Samuel Thomas Evans, esquire, K.C., His Majesty's Solicitor-General.—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

ADJOURNMENT.

Resolved, That this House, at the rising of the House this day, do adjourn till Monday next.—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

NEW WRIT (BOROUGH OF WORCESTER).

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD (Somersetshire, Wellington) moved for the issue of the Writ for Worcester in the room of Mr. G. H. Williamson, whose election has been declared to be void. The right hon. Gentleman reminded the House that the late Attorney-General, whose loss both on public and personal grounds they all so sincerely regretted, had on the last occasion when this Motion was made, at the commencement of the last session, declared that, after looking at all the circumstances of the case and the time during which the issue of the Writ had been already suspended, he saw no reason for further withholding the Writ. The Motion to issue it was, however, rejected by a majority of two. He reminded the House further that the Commissioners, whose inquiry lasted nineteen days and before whom a multitude of witnesses was examined, had found that there was no general corruption. A very small amount of money had changed hands. Only four persons were implicated in the charges, and of those one was acquitted. He submitted to the House that there was no longer any valid reason why 8,549 electors of Worcester should be deprived of their right of sending a Member to the House.

Motion made, and Question proposed—"That Mr. Speaker do issue his Warrant to the Clerk of the Crown to make out a new Writ for the electing of a Member to serve in this present Parliament for the Borough of Worcester, in the room of George Henry Williamson, esquire, whose election has been declared to be void."—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir W. ROBSON, South Shields), said that when this Motion was first made, a few days after the presentation of the Report of the Election Commissioners, it was resisted on the ground that there had not been time to consider the Report; but when the Motion was renewed at the beginning of 1907 the Government thought it was no longer desirable to resist it. The House took a different view. Now the Government considered that, a period of suspension having elapsed, there was, in accordance with all the precedents or in accordance with principle, no valid reason why the Writ should not now issue. In adopting this Motion the Government, of course, did not condone—the House would not think they condoned—the offence charged against the corrupt element in the electorate of Worcester. Nor did they think that the punishment, such as it was, of disfranchisement was in any way adequate to such offences so far as the offenders were concerned. But the House would, he was sure, bear in mind that this was a punishment of a somewhat illogical character. It fell upon the innocent and upon all the innocent as well as upon the guilty, and, unfortunately, it was perhaps the innocent who felt it most acutely. Those who were guilty of the offences charged were the last and the least to suffer any pain from the discredit attaching to this form of punishment. The right hon. Baronet had pointed out with perfect accuracy that the corruption actually discovered and punished was not, perhaps, very extensive in area. It was found, he thought, to the credit of Worcester in some measure, that a very small amount of money changed hands. He did not wish for a moment to imply that the discredit of corruption was lessened by lowering the price, but it pointed to one very gratifying feature, that there was no competition among the corrupters. In the Report there was a finding of a somewhat unusual and very hopeful character. He was not, of course, going into the Report in any party spirit, which would be very improper. But upon the facts the Commission did find that one of the political Parties concerned had by resolution resolved that they would have no part or lot in the corruption in that city, and they had acted on that resolve. There had been a genuine and strenuous effort after political purity in Worcester at the last election, a hopeful circumstance which entitled the electors, on whose behalf he put forward this plea, to say that there had been a meritorious effort to lessen corruption in that ancient city. There was no principle which would enable him to say how many electorally righteous men ought to save a city from electoral extinction; but, at all events, there were in Worcester a very considerable number who were not only innocent in the negative sense, but were earnestly desirous of improving the repute and character of their city, and it was in their interest that the Government now acquiesced in this step.

Question put, and agreed to.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [29th January], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

" *Most Gracious Sovereign,*

We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."(—*Mr. Lehmann.*)

Question again proposed.

* DR. RUTHERFORD (Middlesex, Brentford) rose to move as an Amendment at the end to add:—"But humbly submits that the present condition of affairs in India demands the immediate and serious attention of his Majesty's Government; that the present proposals of the Government of India are inadequate to allay the existing and growing discontent; and that comprehensive measures of reform are imperatively necessary in the direction of giving the people of India control over their own affairs." While confessing his inability to do justice to the great subject of India, he said his desire was to bring about a happier relationship between that country and Great Britain. He presumed the House would admit that outside the United Kingdom the great problem demanding solution was the Indian one, and that until they had satisfactorily solved it they would have failed in their duty. It was an Imperial problem, one worthy of the highest and best conceptions and noblest efforts of that House, yet he was sorry to have to add that in the past the House had treated India too much with the cold shoulder and had subjected it to a great deal of contumely and contempt. But now they had a democratic Parliament and a Secretary of State from which and from whom India was anticipating great and glorious things. Indians had appreciated the noble service which the Secretary of State had rendered in the past to the cause of progress and freedom, and they had expected that under his *régime* the reign of terror and reaction which prevailed under Lord Curzon would be reversed, and that an era of reform and progress would be inaugurated. But instead of that, India had been met with coercive and repressive measures, and now was driven to despair. India for the time being had lost confidence in the justice of British rule. It was hardly necessary for him to do more than briefly recapitulate some of the chief causes of unrest and discontent. Among these causes was the partition of Bengal, carried out under Lord Curzon's rule, in direct opposition to the will of the people —an act which had created great racial animosity, had caused riots, especially in Bengal, and had aroused a deep sense of injustice throughout the length and breadth of India. Secondly, there was the non-fulfilment of the pledges solemnly made by the late Queen Victoria in 1858 in that proclamation which Indians looked on as their Magna Charta of justice and liberty. We in this country had failed to carry out that charter; we had failed to

give an extended system of self-government and to grant Indians a just share in the administration of their own affairs. Then there had been the contemptuous treatment of Indians by Europeans. They could not ignore the hostile attitude of the Press, especially the Anglo-Indian Press in India and a large portion of the British Press at home. The Bishop of Lahore had made a courageous stand against that, and he himself must say he looked upon it as a crime that those who boasted a higher civilisation should throw at the heads of a subject race foul and dishonest epithets. Then there had been the repressive measures indulged in by the Secretary of State for India, who appeared to have overlooked the fact recently stated by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in regard to Ireland that resort to a policy of coercion for the preservation of order and the repression of crime did not bring any nearer a solution of the problem of discontent. Those words applied equally to India and to Ireland. Human nature was very similar in India, in Ireland, and in other parts of the world. The series of repressive measures introduced with regard to public meetings, the Press, and the liberty of the subject had all contributed to the unrest and discontent. He, however, was glad to congratulate the Secretary of State on the release of Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh, which had brought about a healthier and happier state of feeling throughout India. The misfortune was that these men were arrested and deported without trial under an obsolete Act of 1818 which should be repealed without the slightest hesitation by this great nation. With regard to the treatment of British Indians in South Africa, he believed that was to be the subject of a special Amendment to the Address, and he would not therefore dwell upon it; he would content himself with saying there was not the slightest doubt that the feeling in India was one of deep resentment at the unjust treatment meted out to their fellow Indians in South Africa. Then he came to the question of the tyranny of the police, and he would leave it to hon. Members to realise how that tended to create bad blood between the governors and the governed. And, last of all, the national awakening had proved a permanent cause of unrest, which would never be removed until it was properly recognised and treated. That national awakening embraced all races and all creeds—all sections of the community—in fact practically the whole of the people of India. With regard to the partition of Bengal, the Prime Minister promised that any new facts that might arise should have full consideration. He submitted there were new facts which justified the reconsideration of the decision of the Government. He had found wherever he went in India that the unrest caused by the partition still continued, that the policy of repression to allay the unrest was still being enforced, that the bad blood arising from the partition continued to exist between Hindoos and Mohammedans, and that the hatred of British rule on account of the injustice of this Act was deepening and hardening day by day. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would realise the seriousness of the danger and remedy the evil without any further delay. Then there was the financial grievance. Some influential gentlemen alleged that the difference between the exports and imports represented an annual drain on the resources of India to the extent of something like twenty millions sterling. As he was not a financial expert he would express no opinion on the point, but he held that there was a financial drain, due to what was the most costly system of government in the world, due to the pension scheme and the military expenditure which was continually increasing. All that undoubtedly constituted a severe drain on the finances of India. He would not discuss the merits or demerits of the Anglo-Russian Convention, but if it was worth anything at all then the Army of India ought to be reduced. India must be saved this terrible tax upon her financial resources. What was the *raison d'être* of the Indian Army? Now that the bogey of Russian invasion was laid it was evidently to hold India. To keep India down, to keep her in subjection, gave rise to suspicion, and that suspicion passed through the whole of India, and excited resentment. If we could not govern India on trust, then he had to ask what right we had to seek to govern her on any other basis whatever. They were told that the Army was the safeguard of British interests in India. That was to say that we were governing India with the British Army for Imperial purposes. If we did that, surely it was right that we should pay a fair share of the cost of the Indian Army. The Indians felt this to be a deep injustice. We paid nothing towards the cost of the Indian Army, or practically nothing, yet we used it for Imperial purposes in China, Somaliland, South Africa, and other portions of the world. Further, we used India as the training ground of the British soldier. If we used the force in these various ways for Imperial and British purposes, then it was our bounden duty to see that we paid a reasonable share of its cost. He maintained that we should pay at least one-third if not one-half of the cost. There had been some unrest in the Punjab among the Army. He did not know the depth or the extent of the unrest, but it appeared that it had reference to Acts passed by the Punjab Government which affected relatives and friends of members of the Indian section of the Army. He did not say that the members of the Indian Army were not influenced by agitators or political speakers, still the root cause among the Indian section of the Army was that their friends had been badly treated by the Punjab Government, and naturally there was a certain amount of unrest. That was temporary, and the cause had been removed by the Punjab Government, who saw the unwisdom of the Acts and repealed them. They had also reduced the rates on the canals and on other things which had caused unrest.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. MORLEY, Montrose Burghs): The Acts were never assented to.

*DR. RUTHERFORD: They were passed by the Provincial Legislature. But it is quite true that they were never assented to by the Secretary of State nor by the Government of India. Fortunately that had had a considerable effect in restoring confidence in the Indian section of the British Army. But there was a permanent cause of unrest in India in respect of the difference of pay between the Indian and British sections of the Indian Army. Then there was the difference of pay between the Indian Civil servants and men in the Indian Army. Another cause of still deeper resentment was that the men of the Indian section of the Indian Army could not rise to the highest appointments in the Army. They felt that there was a permanent colour bar to their rising to the highest rank. This was a source of sore discontent He had had the privilege of discussing this question with one of our chief generals in India, who said that it was an injustice and that it was deeply felt; that it was an injustice that we must remedy; we must trust the Indians, and allow them to rise to the highest commands in the Army. He gave that as the authoritative statement of one of the best commanders that we had in India to-day. There was also the feeling among gentlemen in India that there was no career for them in the Indian Army. We could not get the best men, why? Because there was no career for anyone above the rank, he believed, of subadar-major. The same thing was true of all departments of the State. In the Civil Service no Indians could rise to the highest appointments. There was not a single Indian on the Executive Council, nor one holding a high, distinguished, or responsible office in the Civil Service. The case was a shade better in regard to the law. Among the High Court Judges there was only about one Indian Judge to every six European Judges, and this caused a deep sense of injustice among the legal profession. It was the same with the medical profession, to which he had the honour to belong. The Indians could not get the highest medical appointments in that country. The appointments to the hospitals and colleges, and all the best sanitary appointments in the country, were kept in the hands of Europeans, and again they saw the colour bar established. The same practice prevailed on the railways and other public services throughout India. The Chief Secretary said the other day that it was almost impossible for him to rule Ireland against the wishes of the people. That was also true of India. It was almost impossible for us as aliens to govern India wisely and well, and according to the opinions, and reasoned opinions, of our Indian fellow-subjects. Then there was the excise on cotton. That was passed in 1877, when Lord Salisbury was in power. It was passed in the interests of Lancashire, and directly against the interests of the people of India. That excise duty, which stood to day, had been a great source of irritation throughout India. He had asked the highest of the British Civil officials in India what the feeling was with regard to this tax. They said it was true that it was an intolerable injustice to India, and they had asked him to use his influence in that House in order to have it removed. Indian justice was handicapped by the British rulers, who sought, not the highest interests of India, but the financial interests of this country. In the long run he did not think that it was to the financial interests of this country, because there was such a thing as retaliation, and that spirit was already abroad in India. As regarded justice, it was very difficult for a foreign Power to govern another country on the highest and truest lines of justice, and he thought that recently, however we might have erred in the past, we had lost the confidence of the Indian people so far as British justice was concerned—British justice as between Europeans and Indians and as between Mohammedans and Hindoos. A European killed his bearer in the Punjab, and for that dastardly and murderous assault he only got six months.

MR. MORLEY: Name?

*DR. RUTHERFORD: I have forgotten the name for the moment. Continuing, the hon. Member said that some Europeans at Rawal Pindi raped an Indian woman, but were acquitted. In the same city a number of leading barristers and pleaders accused, as it turned out, altogether falsely of fomenting a riot, were refused bail and kept in imprisonment for nearly five months. Then there was the Comilla case which almost stood on a par with the Denshawai incident in its effect upon the public mind. There a Mohammedan was shot in a riot, and three Hindoos were brought before the magistrate and condemned, one of them to death, and two to transportation for life. The High Court quashed the judgment. With the permission of the House he would quote two statements made at the trial. Mr. Jackson, the English barrister, appearing for the defence addressing the Judges, said—

> "I submit there cannot be the slightest doubt that I am entitled to an acquittal. Every sentence of the whole evidence on the record is stamped with unmistakable marks of concoction. The whole case has been got up from start to finish. There is no time limit for a prosecution by Government, and it is shameful that such a prosecution as the present should have been rushed up without any evidence, worth the name, to support it. My Lords, apart from the great miscarriage of justice consequent upon such prosecutions, a prosecution like this cannot but fail to bring the whole of the administration of the Courts of Justice in this country into contempt."

Then the two Judges, one British and the other Indian, made this indictment of the judgment of the Court below with which they were dealing—

> "The method of the learned Judge in dealing with the testimony of the witnesses by dividing them into two classes—Hindoos and Mussulmans—and accepting the evidence of one class and rejecting that of the other, is open to severe criticism. The learned Judge ought to have directed his mind solely to the evidence which had been given before him, and to have excluded from his consideration all preconceived sympathies with either section of the population."

This case had caused a serious feeling of injustice right throughout India. He would take another Department in order to show how difficult it was for Europeans to govern India wisely and well and in the interests of India. The land revenue had gone up steadily for various reasons—some of them proper reasons, where there was more land brought into cultivation, or where it was subjected to irrigation. Still, the assessment was frequently felt to be a very serious injustice. One of the great difficulties in India was famine, and one of the causes of famine was the heavy taxes which the ryot had to pay. The amount was such that he was unable to accumulate profits or to make provision for a rainy day. Famine really came from the poverty of the peasant proprietor far more than from scarcity of food. Their chief effort should be to reduce taxation. In his opinion far too little money was being spent upon irrigation, and they had yet to realise that what they had done so wisely in Egypt they should also do in India. Egypt had practically been converted into a garden by great irrigation schemes. It was true they had had great irrigation schemes in India, but they had not spent anything like adequate sums of money in this direction to meet the requirements of the case. Again, the education problem was a great source of trouble and trial to India. Education was the first need of any country, and it was the first need in India. Education was all the more essential to India because she was an agricultural country and required to be taught to use her soil to the best advantage, which could only be done by education. Education entered essentially into the methods of dealing effectively with the plague, and technical education was also necessary for the proper development of the industries of the country. To preserve law and order they must educate the people, but they wanted education most of all to improve the national character of the people. Upon this subject of education what did they find? In ten years the expenditure upon education in India had been less than the expenditure upon the Army in a single year. India could not be satisfactorily governed until they saw that every village and every child had the opportunity of getting a reasonable and proper education. The small expenditure upon education in India was an appalling scandal and a terrible reflection upon British rule. The root evil in India was the system of Government, which created a spirit of despotism and tyranny in those who carried it on, however good the intentions might be with which they entered upon their task. The difficulties by which they were surrounded were absolutely insuperable. They were inherent in the system. The danger to-day was the bureaucracy. That was what they had to face, and he hoped they would face it with courage. The officials had resisted every effort made by Lord Ripon to bring about a reasonable and proper system of Government, and they had frustrated all his efforts. The officials had captured the Universities, the municipalities, the district, provincial and Imperial councils, and, in fact, every public institution, and they had deprived the people of India of the opportunity of taking advantage of the great effort made by Lord Ripon. The right hon. Gentleman himself had said—

> "It is remarkable how the Government know so little of the mind of the people and it is just as deplorable that the people know so little of the mind of the Government."

In that statement the right hon. Gentleman acknowledged the case he was trying to make out. It was not his contention that the Government of India had been a dead failure, but that it had been a comparative failure. Some good and noble things had been done, but he desired still better things. The only means by which the Government could get to know the mind of the people was through directly elected representatives. The Secretary for India said the situation was not at all dangerous but required serious and urgent attention. Perhaps it was not dangerous if they looked at it from the point of view of an armed rebellion, but from the point of view of alienating the people from British rule it was extremely serious. Some 150 years ago India sustained a fracture, and she was put in British splints, but we kept them on much too long, and to-day they were causing friction, irritation, and even laceration. It was time they were taken off, and any wise surgeon would remove them without delay. A few years ago half-measures might have sufficed to meet the situation, but that was now no longer the case. The Indians had seen how Japan had risen to a great nation, and they had seen the inhabitants of the Transvaal and the Orange River territory receive their freedom. We were face to face either with great reforms or with a revolution, and he trusted the Government would have sufficient sense of duty and justice to give them those reforms which were necessary to avoid a revolution. He would like to say a few words with regard to the proposals of the Indian Government for satisfying the demands of India — contained in the White Paper, a few extracts from which would suffice. With regard to the Imperial Advisory Council there occurred the following passage—

> "The establishment and recognition of a determined body of advisers who, while requiring no legislative recognition, and possessing in themselves no formal powers of initiative, would be consulted individually by the Governor-General, and would occasionally be called together, either in whole or in part, for the purpose of collective deliberation, and would be entitled, when so summoned, to offer their counsel on matters affecting the welfare of the people, would, in the opinion of the Government of India, be a marked step in constitutional progress."

He would now quote a passage from the same document showing how this Imperial Advisory Council was to be formed—

> "(2) That all the members should be appointed by the Viceroy and should receive the title 'Imperial Councillors.' (3) That the council should consist of about sixty members for the whole of India, including about twenty ruling chiefs, and a suitable number of the territorial magnates of every province where landholders of sufficient dignity and *status* are to be found."

We who were burdened with a House of Lords proposed to establish what was virtually an advisory House of Lords in India. He hoped the House would not consent to such a measure. And now with regard to the proposals for the enlargement of the legislative councils. Paragraph 9 said—

> "In the case of provincial councils it is admitted that the results have not justified the expectations formed. The District Boards in particular have conspicuously failed to fulfil the expectation that they would represent the landed interest."

The objection was that the barristers and pleaders had been selected by the people to represent them in preference to the landholders, the great magnates and the ruling chiefs. With regard to the Imperial Legislative Council it was proposed to keep the control in the hands of the official majority, and to introduce a system of special Mahomedan representation.

It would introduce a vicious principle, not only in relation to the ruling class, but also because it differentiated between Hindoos and Mahomedans. That, he believed, was one of the greatest blots on the proposals. The same was true practically of the provincial Legislative Councils, as they were to be re-constituted. He might summarise what he considered to be the blots on the proposals of the Indian Government. They were (1) the maintenance of the official majority; (2) the introduction of class and religious preferences; and (3) the swamping of the popular element in the council. He considered these proposals unjust and unworthy of the present House of Commons. He trusted that they had not the approval of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India. He could not imagine for a moment that they had his approval, and he trusted that they would hear no more of them. The only thing of real value in the proposals was the acknowledgment on the part of the Government of India that the present state of the administration of India was not satisfactory. The right hon. Gentleman said that Lord Lytton set up an Advisory Council of Notables of the kind now proposed in 1887, and admitted that it was a complete failure. Why should we expect that under Lord Minto or any other Viceroy, it should again be anything else than a complete failure? He himself believed that it would become a great danger to British rule, and that it would land us in difficulties insuperable. He asked the House to allow him to lay before them some of the questions to which he thought they should address themselves. He did not think that the Decentralisation Commission would be of much service; it would not save the situation. It might supplant imperial despots by parochial despots, but it would not give the Indians what they required, namely, a form of national Government. The Indian demand was not for the tinsel, the pageantry, or extravagances of Durbars, but for self-government under the British flag on colonial lines. They declined to submit any longer to personal and bureaucratic government. What he thought would meet the case was, first of all, provincial Parliaments; and, secondly, an imperial Duma. The imperial Duma should be representative of the whole community, including the native states as well as British India. The principle involved in these proposals was already in existence in the form of legislative councils. But the people should have direct representation, and the councils should be free from official control. The idea Englishmen should aim at should be a federation of free states in India under the British flag. The governors of the respective provinces would still have the right of veto over the decisions of the provincial Parliaments, and the Viceroy, of course, would have the right of veto over the decisions of the Imperial assembly. The Civil Service would have to learn that they were servants and not masters as they were to-day. The members of all these assemblies, whether imperial or provincial, should be appointed by direct election and not by nomination; there should be no religious or racial preferences; and there should be no second chamber. The Secretary of State in a speech at Arbroath said that some of them were impatient idealists. If they were impatient idealists they had the right hon. Gentleman to thank. They had sat at his feet, and a great portion of their idealism they had learned from him. He himself was not impatient with his ideals; he had faith, and hope, and courage. He believed that the Indians were capable of working out their own salvation on the lines he had suggested, and he hoped the House would have sufficient courage to give them a fair trial. The right hon. Gentleman had said that most of the disasters in human history had been due to impatient idealists. On the contrary, he thought that most of the tragic miscarriages in human history had been due to autocracy and bureaucracy. Why were the Government stricken with a craven fear in regard to India? They were not stricken with a craven fear in dealing with South Africa. There they had a policy, and they had carried it out, and to-day South Africa extended to us the right hand of fellowship. In South Africa there was a true union of hearts. There should be a true union of hearts with India as well. If they were afraid of the idea of an imperial Duma, he hoped the Government would try the experiment of provincial Parliaments in Bombay, Bengal, Madras, and the Punjab. If the other provinces would be patient their turn would come. It had been said that India was a museum of races and religious creeds. The truth was that most of them could be put in one or two cases. The only practical difficulty, so far as religion was concerned, was really in connection with Mahomedans and Hindus. They lived happily together in all portions not directly under British rule. He did not think they need be alarmed at any difficulty with respect to the religious side of the question. Then there were several reforms which should be carried out at home. One of these was the abolition of the Indian Council. It was of no service, so far as he could see, to this House. In fact, he rather thought it was an insult to the House. He trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would be able to get rid of that Council, and that he would appoint instead a Standing Committee of the House if he desired assistance. Further, it was absolutely necessary that the Secretary of State's salary should be placed on the British Estimates, as it was in the case of the Secretary of State for the Colonies. It might be urged with regard to the suggestions he had made that they were premature. He did not think that that objection should hold good. Mr. Bright more than fifty years ago laid before the House a plan not altogether dissimilar to that which he had stated for getting rid of central government. The Secretary of State objected to universal suffrage in India. He did not propose that there should be universal suffrage. There were two systems under which the franchise might be given—one, educational, by ability to read and write, and the other, financial, by payment of land tax, income-tax, or any other taxes. He did not propose to suggest any system of universal suffrage. All he submitted was that the present method of government was out of date and unsatisfactory and needed reform. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India had faith in Mr. Mill—so had he and those who agreed with him. The right hon. Gentleman had reminded them during the last debate on the Indian Budget that Mr. Mill had said "Government by the dominant country is as legitimate as any other if it is the one which in the existing state of civilisation of the subject people, most facilitates that transition to our state of civilisation." Very well, but if the object of Great Britain as the dominant State, was to impose its civilization on India, the best way to effect that object was to give our political institutions to India. If, in the words of the Secretary of State, they wanted to inculcate and transplant "the spirit, the temper, the principles, and the maxims of the British Constitution" to India, the best way to do it was to give them something like the British Constitution, without the House of Lords. The right hon. Gentleman said that he was not frightened of the National Congress, neither was Mr. Nevinson nor himself, who had been present at the last session. There had been a great deal of exaggeration and misconception in this country with regard to the National Congress. What had occurred at the last Congress was simply due to the fact that the Extremists or Radicals differed so greatly from the Moderates or Tories that they lost their temper.

Mr. MORLEY: Do you call Mr. Lajpat Rai a Tory?

*Dr. RUTHERFORD: No, he might be called a Conservative of a reasonable and moderate type. He had not joined the Extremists yet. He himself had interviewed Mr. Lajpat Rai, and he could assure the right hon. Gentleman that that gentleman was a man of the type of Dr. Spence Watson, a perfectly reasonable man, who was the President for many years of the National Liberal Federation. All that was trumped up against Mr. Lajpat Rai was due to false and frivolous reports of ignorant police. As for the National Congress, all that had happened there was that the Extremists had lost their heads and charged the platform because they wanted their own man to be the chief and leader of that great assembly. He understood that the Imperialists were making great capital out of this incident, and were declaring that Indians were not capable of self-government. But that sort of thing had happened sometimes in this country also. He himself had had experience of it. Along with his right hon. friend the Member for Morpeth, he was present at a peace meeting at Newcastle-on-Tyne during the late war when the platform was attacked by the Tories. The speakers were not allowed to say a word, and the meeting was broken up. He had yet to learn that in consequence of that the Tories of Newcastle were unfit to govern their city; and to govern India. He would ask the President of the Board of Trade what experience he had had in Birmingham? How did he get on in that city? Had Birmingham been disfranchised yet for the way he had been treated in the town hall at the time of the late war? The Extremists in India owed their strength to the folly of Lord Curzon and to the policy of the repressive measures which had been followed up to the present time. If there had been no Lord Curzon in India there would be no Extremists in India to day. He could assure the Secretary of State for India that the proposals of reform made by the Government of India were inadequate, and would drive these men to extremes which might lead to disastrous consequences. There was no foundation for the objection that Indians were unfit to govern themselves. Self-government already existed in large portions of India, outside British territory. The Native States in India were responsible for something like seventy millions of people. He had had the advantage of visiting Baroda, and he would say that in many respects it formed a pattern which might be followed with advantage by the British Government. Parliamentary institutions had been granted to Greece, Bulgaria, and Servia, but were any of these places fit for representative government when it was conceded to them? Were the people of England fit for self-government when Simon de Montfort created the Mother of Parliaments? Were the working classes of this country fit for the exercise of the vote when the franchise was given to them? He would leave it to his friends on the Labour Benches to answer that question. He knew that it was stated that while the people of India might be intellectually fit for self-government, they were not morally fit, but he maintained that they had no right to indict a whole nation in that way. There were other serious considerations which the House should take into account in approaching this great subject. There was first the duty Englishmen owed to themselves. The burden of arms was crushing our people, and that burden was largely due to our possession of India. Then there was the duty they owed to Egypt. Egypt was the gateway to India, and until our Indian house was set in order, Egyptian emancipation would be delayed. Lastly, there was the duty they owed to India and to the world at large. The present system of government in India was crushing all that was best in a very noble people who had a magnificent past, and who had made magnificent contributions towards the progress and well-being of humanity. Our mission in India was threefold. In the first place it was for us to organise free and representative institutions by which India could be governed according to Indian ideas. In the second place, our mission was to keep the peace within, and in the third place to protect India from any external foe until she was able to protect herself. No nobler service could be rendered by a great nation to a weak nation "rightly struggling to be free" than that, and he trusted that we would rise to the height of this glorious opportunity. He begged to move.

*SIR H. COTTON (Nottingham, E.) said he did not rise to second the Amendment to the Address moved by his hon. friend with the same feeling of hope with which he had risen on a similar occasion two years ago. During the intervening period many things had happened in India which were certainly not of a very encouraging nature to those who were deeply interested in the welfare of the people. When he left India a few years ago there was no unrest or discontent to speak of. The condition of things in a general way continued to resemble that which had existed during the previous generation. He left India towards the close of Lord Curzon's first term of office. The irritation which was sensibly growing during the latter part of Lord Curzon's *régime* had since come to a head. What was that due to? It was due simply and solely to administering the affairs of India in a spirit regardless and contemptuous of the feelings of the people. It was that policy which had created the difficult position in which the Secretary of State for India now found himself and with which he had to deal. The policy of Lord Curzon culminated in the accursed partitioning of Bengal. He was obliged to say that it was in the power of the right hon. Gentleman to have re-opened that question. The partition was effected in October, and the right hon. Gentleman was in power in December, when he might have re-opened the question with the greatest ease, and, with the help of those who were friendly to India in his own Council and out of it, he might have devised a scheme which would have resulted in averting many of the troubles which had since arisen in India. He could not help attributing to the right hon. Gentleman very serious blame for his inaction. There were other matters of temporary importance of which they had heard, such as the disturbances in the Punjab; but that was not unrest of a permanent character, it was due entirely to injudicious measures taken by the Punjab Government. Those disturbances were magnified by telegrams, and indeed an impression was created that another mutiny was about to occur in India. A panic arose in India and a corresponding panic followed in England. He did not think the right hon. Gentleman ever grasped what the real position in the Punjab at that time was. It was a very small matter which could have been adequately dealt with by the removal of the causes which led to the discontent. The Punjab was now a quiet and peaceful province. He was not aware that there was any exceptional discontent remaining there. And why? Because the causes of the temporary discontent had been removed, and this notwithstanding the fact that a policy was followed in that province of the most rigorous and intolerable repression. The extraordinary measure of deporting gentlemen without charge and without trial was resorted to, and that was an action which met with an indignant protest throughout the whole of India. That deportation was a blunder. He was thankful that that blunder too had been redressed, so far as that the gentlemen concerned had been restored to their liberty and their homes. But the sore remained; the injustice was done, and the effect produced on Indian opinion had to be specially deplored. There was now a feeling of unrest and discontent in India, which it would be idle to describe as otherwise than very serious. He thought the right hon. Gentleman recognised that fact. It was due in the first instance to Lord Curzon's policy, and he was obliged to add it was aggravated by the policy of repression and coercion which had been maintained in India since Lord Curzon left the country. If Lord Curzon sowed the seeds of discontent, which he certainly did, the growth of the plant had been most carefully fostered and nurtured by the Government since his time. They could, he believed, however, deal with these matters satisfactorily only by taking the people of India into their confidence, and by making some serious attempt to remedy grievances and redress wrong. The greatest difficulty in India, from which all their troubles arose, was the system of government. It was a bureaucratic, autocratic, and despotic form of government. That system, as represented by the Indian Civil Service, had remained practically unchanged for 120 years, and the people were beginning to say that it was time there should be some change and that instead of a continental system, instead of a system of prefects and officials placed over them in charge of defined localities, there should be some method of procedure under which the people of the locality should be themselves entrusted with a share of power and should exercise, in a measure, the functions which foreign officials were now appointed to discharge. There was also a feeling, which was universal throughout India, that this body of foreign officials were singularly unfit and incompetent to discharge the judicial functions with which they were entrusted. The feeling in India was the same as in this country, that those were best qualified to discharge judicial functions who had been trained in the profession of the law. If we had done one thing in India more than another, it had been to encourage the study of the law, and to establish in the minds of the people of India the idea that the country was administered under the rule and authority of the law. But we still retained in the hands of these civil servants all important judicial powers and there was no recognition of the people of the country. All the sessions Judges were civilians, who none of them had received legal training and none of them were trained in the exercise of judicial functions. The consequence was the terrible miscarriages of justice which were so common. How common they were was shown by the fact that the highest court of judicature in the country was continually employed in releasing unfortunate men who had been unjustly sentenced, it might be to capital punishment, or it might be to a long term of imprisonment. It was the tendency of all executive officers—and the judicial officers in India were all executive Magistrates and Judges—it was the tendency of all these Judges to be harsh in their decisions and if the right hon. Gentleman looked into the matter he would find that there was an invariable tendency in India to pass what we in this country, with our humaner ideals, would call excessive sentences. For similar offences in this country and in India there was no comparison between the sentences. For instance, for stealing two pumpkins an unfortunate boy was ordered to be punished by receiving twenty stripes. That happened a short time ago in Calcutta. Would an outrage of that kind be tolerated in this country? No! the papers would be ringing with it and there would be appeals to the Home Secretary. He complained of the constitution of the legal system, and said that the people of India looked to a Liberal Government and to a Secretary of State so exceptionally accomplished as the right hon. Gentleman to initiate measures which should lead to a substantial modification in the existing form of the Civil Service and to popularising administrative institutions in India. That was a large question and undoubtedly it was not an easy one to solve. It was a question of modifying the constitution of the Civil Service with a view to rendering the administration of the country more popular and representative. That, he thought, was one of the most crucial and urgent matters affecting the welfare of India. He appreciated that it had difficulties, but it became no easier by delay. They would never get suggestions from India in this direction, for no privileged body ever took steps to abolish itself or to deprive itself of any of the privileges it enjoyed. If they wanted to improve the composition of the House of Lords they did not expect that the House of Lords would do it for themselves, and if they expected the constitution of the Indian Civil Service to be reformed they must not expect that those reforms would be initiated in India. If they left it to the Government there to take the initiative they might wait for ever. He did not intend to trouble the House with any further remarks upon this or other questions, but he desired particularly to impress upon the right hon. Gentleman the importance of taking up this question of reconstituting the system of Indian administration. He was aware that it was not to be done in a day, but the time had come to do it, and the longer it was delayed the more difficult they would find it. The Amendment which had been moved by his hon. friend was, he thought, a just and fair one. It had been moved to enable the right hon. Gentleman to make a statement which the people of India would recognise as kindly, friendly, and sympathetic to all classes, and if he was able to make such a statement, even without definitely pledging himself to further action—if he was only able to assure our fellow-subjects in India that his heart was with them and that he was strongly and keenly desirous of helping them in the difficult position in which they were placed—if he sympathised with them in the growth of that nationality which was the most marked feature of popular feeling in India at the present time—if he was able to address them in that sense he would have rendered a public service for which the people of India would be grateful. He begged to second.

Amendment proposed—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'But humbly submits that the present condition of affairs in India demands the immediate and serious attention of His Majesty's Government; that the present proposals of the Government of India are inadequate to allay the existing and growing discontent;

and that comprehensive measures of reform are imperatively necessary in the direction of giving the people of India control over their own affairs.'"—(*Dr. Rutherford.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. HART-DAVIES (Hackney, N.) said he supposed that they were agreed that the position of India at the present moment was entirely unsatisfactory, but he thought that the growth of the evils which were now apparent went back to a much earlier date than most hon. Members believed. They began at least some twenty-five years ago. He did not think any people were more easy to govern than the people of India. He had lived among them for many years and he loved them. They were the kindest people in the world to associate with. The question was, what particular steps ought the Government to take to improve the condition of things in India? He thought that they ought to begin with local self-government, and thus give an ambitious man a career in his own province or district. People complained that the native members took no interest in the work of the district boards. He was not surprised. These boards had to control large tracts of country and the money given to them was not adequate for their purposes, and was not even under their control when it was given, because the boards were composed of Mahomedan members or of officials. These boards ought to be giving the control of the affairs in which they were concerned, and the control taken away from the district officer, who would then have much more time to study and to know the people in his district than he now possessed. It would be a good thing both for the district officer and for the administration. The only way in which the natives could learn to govern themselves was from their own experience, and if they were given larger funds from Government sources, and greater control over the local business in which they were concerned, it would give the people a larger voice in their administration and afford a counter-attraction to the political career which was now the only one open to an ambitious man. The reforms which had been adumbrated by the right hon. Gentleman did not go very far, but he believed that if he took this particular step and added to the power of district boards, and if he could ensure that all positions in the Civil Service that could be held by natives should be held by them and so give them a larger control in the government of their country, the present discontent would have a tendency to die out. No doubt it would be a good many years before the ideal of one hon. Member, of local parliaments all over the country, could be arrived at. but in the matter of local self-government, by adopting such a suggestion as he proposed, the people of India might be trained to govern themselves far better than they were being governed now; and he certainly thought that his suggestion was one which might be taken into favourable consideration by the right hon. Gentleman. He hoped that India would be taken seriously in hand. It was a disgrace to the Empire that this state of unrest should continue. The House ought to make up their minds to the fact that a new departure in the government of the country was necessary, and, in order to secure the new spirit which was necessary, there ought to be a Parliamentary Committee to consider the affairs of India generally. In the old days, when the government of India was in the hands of the Chartered Company, every time the charter was renewed a Parliamentary Committee was appointed to consider the whole question of the government of India. He thought a Parliamentary Committee should be appointed now in order to bring fresh ideas to bear. In appointing such a Committee he believed the right hon. Gentleman would be justified by the result of its deliberations and would crown his career with a step which must be for the good of India and the Empire at large.

*MR. O'GRADY (Leeds, E.) said the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had asked for the serious consideration of this question by the House, but the condition of the benches at the present moment did not indicate a very burning interest in Indian affairs. The only purpose of his intervention was to supplement what had been said by hon. gentlemen opposite. His position was well known. He was in the first place a democrat, and for good or for evil he had been returned as a Member of the House. He took, and intended to take, great interest in the important question of the good government of India. The hon. Member who moved the Amendment had referred to the grave discontent which animated India at the present time, and had further said that the Government of India were not acting in a proper spirit. He (Mr. O'Grady) expressed the opinion that the overwhelming cause of unrest in India arose largely from the fact that the government of that country was unsympathetic. In that view he was supported by some of the highest of the Indian Civil servants. He was, however, more concerned with the fact that India was the most poverty-stricken country that existed. Although we had governed that country for a large number of years, the prosperity of the people of India so far as he could gather from statistics and reading had in no sense increased in the aggregate. The very first reform that ought to be made was the institution of a system of free and compulsory education. Twopence halfpenny per head per annum was the total amount spent on the education of India to-day. That being so, we had not justified our existence there. India was not only poverty-stricken but ignorant, and for the ignorance that existed we were responsible. He knew there had been difficulties in the way of education; that we were met by the barriers of race and creed, but taking that for granted, all sane social reformers of to-day moved along the line of least resistance; and no Member of the House who had considered the question seriously could but come to the conclusion that the people of India would in fifteen or twenty years from the time when we instituted full, free, and compulsory education be ripe for this representative institution which had been recommended by his hon. friend who had lately travelled in that country. Nobody could object to a proposal of that character, and, that being so, it ought to be in the power of the House so to order matters that that reform should take place immediately. It might be said that it would be met with the opposition of persons who had been described as "Sun-dried bureaucrats," but he for one did not believe that they would oppose such a proposal. He trusted that the right hon. Gentlemen responsible for the present government of India would seriously take into consideration the opinions repeatedly expressed in the House that the question of primary education in India should be tackled at once. The broader question of technical education had also been referred to by the mover of the Amendment, especially its necessity in connection with agriculture. The agricultural methods obtaining in India were centuries old and absolutely obsolete, and the people were unable to make the best of their own country. When he came to consider the fact that a very small number of institutions existed in India which gave the ryot on the land or the artisan in the big towns an opportunity of acquiring knowledge, in the first case of improved methods of cultivation and in the second of plans for developing the industries of India, he was forced to the conclusion that the shame for the neglect rested not on the shoulders of the Indian people at all, but on our own shoulders. Reference had been made to the mischief caused by the partition of Bengal. There could not be a shadow of doubt that the existing discontent was largely due to the maladministration of the late Viceroy of India. He wished to emphasise the statement made by his hon. friend that the partition of Bengal was carried out for reasons other than those publicly advanced. The fact was, the Bengalis in particular had become a thorn in the side of the system of government which prevailed in India. They had been claiming not only for themselves, but for the people of India generally, that they should have a larger share in the government of their own country and that their country should be governed according to Indian ideas. Lord Curzon acted on the principle of "divide the people and you will rule," and he took care so to draw the line as to separate the people into religions. All the Mahomedans were on one side of the line which divided the province, and all the Hindoos on the other. He was not going to suggest that the geographical line was thus drawn in order to foment strife between these two sections of the people, but the fact remained that these people flew at each others' throats, and Lord Curzon came down with his military and armed police and broke the heads of both Mahomedans and Hindus. That was the way he thought he had settled the difficulty, but Lord Curzon overlooked the fact that the people of this province would in the ordinary course of things become aware of the purpose of this policy, and once again unite on a common platform. That they had done so was the one outstanding fact of the present agitation in Bengal. The present Secretary for India had practically accepted the position thus created in Bengal, and had adhered to what he called the "settled fact" policy as ending the matter. As a democrat, he strongly protested against that policy of the "settled fact." Where would it logically lead them? Tyranny might be committed prior to a given date; was it to be allowed to continue because it was a settled fact? Was wrong to remain, was injustice to continue simply because it had been committed? He was unable to reconcile the convictions of the right hon. Gentleman in respect of this line of policy. Surely someone could suggest to the right hon. Gentleman a way out of this unfortunate difficulty. Perhaps the policy of the "settled fact" had been adopted because of the panic that existed in India, and the petty squabbles that subsequently arose. All the incidents in connection with the partition of Bengal were largely of a panic character; but sane men had smiled at the suggestion of the danger of another Mutiny developing in India. It was his unfortunate duty last year to be constantly questioning the right hon. Gentleman with regard to the lying and vindictive statements sent over to this country from India by so-called organs of public opinion, which to-day, as always, had been doing their best to bolster up iniquity and injustice in all parts of the world. Before the session ended there was a compact entered into with one of these infamous organs which had been repeatedly sending lying telegrams to this country about the development of sedition and mutiny. He challenged the right. hon. Gentleman to deny that a sum of £1,200 drawn from Indian taxation—the money of the poverty-stricken people of India—had been used to subsidise an "organ" sending these lying telegrams in order that the policy of coercion and repression might be continued with all its vindictiveness. He could not be patient with the attitude they were taking up in India. In his opinion a wider and broader view should be taken than that of merely keeping a strong hand on the people. After all, the Indians were the most docile people in the world. They were patient—in his judgment too patient—from the point of view of suffering poverty and famine; in being content to remain ignorant; in being content to salaam and to bow and abase themselves to the European. While he agreed that British rule had achieved splendid results for India, he asserted that there was the other view which ought to be taken. Only recently the British Indians in South Africa, who had admittedly proved themselves to be honest, industrious, sober and just, had been allowed to be treated by the Colonists as a mere inferior race, and not as British subjects ought to be treated. Had they been the subjects of some Foreign Power who had been thus treated—the subjects of Germany or of France, for instance—we should have been willing to go almost to the verge of war in order to protect them. He referred to this because in respect of the whole Indian race—whether in India or in the Transvaal—it seemed to him the British Government had allowed itself to pursue an absolutely unsympathetic system of government. Now he came to the arrest and deportation of Lajpat Rai and Agit Singh. Of course these gentlemen had been released, but the position he and others had taken up was that there was no proof that Lajpat Rai had preached sedition; he was merely an ordinary land reformer, and having read a verbatim report of the speech at Lahore, for which the arrest was made, he asserted that there was not in it a single word which justified the charge of preaching sedition. The Indian Government dared not at the present time give Lajpat Rai a trial before a jury or in an open Court. He challenged the right hon. Gentleman to take such a course of action. It might be said there were reasons why the trial should not take place, but the gentleman concerned and the people of India would not be satisfied with that explanation. Either Lajpat Rai was properly arrested for preaching sedition or an enormous blunder had been committed. Let them find out where they stood in this matter. In respect to the treatment of Indians when appearing before the Courts, referred to by his hon. friend who seconded the Amendment, time after time last session questions were put to the right hon. Gentleman showing the absolute absurdity, apart from the severity, of the sentences passed in the Courts on boys for the mere act of stealing little things and upon men for acts which in this country would only be deemed to call for censure from the bench. Yet imprisonment up to two years and flogging was inflicted on the natives! He was glad to admit that so far as flogging was concerned the right hon. Gentleman had done really good work and had acted very humanely, and he thanked him for it. But the fact remained that the administration of justice in India displayed the same unsympathetic spirit as characterised the ordinary administration of Indian affairs. He agreed with his hon. friend who moved the Amendment that the difficulties in the way of the bureaucracy were very considerable, but the real necessity for granting India some measure of self-government was to be found in the fact that the work of the European official had so largely increased. As an alien he was dumped down in the midst of a large population and every one had to go to him for redress. The result was that he got in the habit of brushing things aside, not with any desire to be contemptuous, but nevertheless redress in the majority of cases was impossible in such circumstances, and if we wanted to safeguard our position in India and to justify our remaining there we certainly should have to do something along the lines suggested by the hon. Member for the Brentford Division. With him he was profoundly dissatisfied with the suggested reforms submitted to the House by the Secretary of State. Let them take one point. The two native gentlemen who had been put on the Indian Council had no weight because they were carefully selected and were not representative, and he hoped that when the occasion arose for placing two natives on the Indian Council at home, care would be taken to secure representative men. The whole trouble was that the dominant element was always official and not representative of the people of India. If the right hon. Gentleman would only get information from those who were well known to speak for the people as well as from the officials, a betterment would take place immediately. Some years ago H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, at the Guildhall, after his Indian tour, said—

> "What India requires is sympathy."

But since those historic words were spoken at the Guildhall we had continued to govern India with the iron hand, by the sword, by oppression, by coercion, by mismanagement, by an unsympathetic bureaucracy, and the danger was growing. There had been developing in India during the last ten years an expression of a national life, a national ideal, which was breaking down all barriers of caste and religion. If some loophole were given for this sentiment to realise itself and work in harmony with the present government, we should justify our existence in India and gain the grateful thanks of the Indian people.

*MR. SMEATON (Stirlingshire), said he was thankful that the later speakers had come down from the clouds and from the rare atmosphere—an atmosphere in which he had found it difficult to breathe—into which the hon. Member for Brentford had carried them; he trusted that his hon. friend would not press his Motion to a division for the simple reason, as he was probably very well aware, that the right hon. Gentleman had indicated his full sympathy with the aspirations of the people of India, and were proceeding towards real reform on right lines. The right hon. Gentleman's proceedings were taken in a cautious manner, and he hoped that no undue pressure would be put upon the Minister by a division at the present moment. There were certain improvements and reforms which the right hon. Gentleman had adumbrated, and in regard to them there was one matter to which he wished to draw the attention of the House; it had reference to what was described in the speech of the mover as "the great national awakening." The mover of the Amendment had said that the present unrest in India was a great national awakening. There was no doubt that at the present moment there was an awakening—a great national movement—a great impulse. How had it been created? How was it that it had grown so rapidly to such dimensions? It was very important to know where they were, and to trace the causes and motives to their source. He recollected that about the year 1898–9 the Indian Congress was the embodiment of advanced Indian opinion, and it proceeded in the advocacy of reform on purely constitutional lines, and with great moderation. There was no attempt to use or to suggest either physical force or undue moral force. Since 1898–9, and during the incumbency of the late Viceroy of India the Congress was ignored, and all suggestions for its recognition met with haughty rebuff: and no doubt a tremendous stimulus had been given by this attitude of the late Administration to the aspirations for freedom among the people of India —freedom from the bureaucratic system which that Administration, more than any other during the last fifty years, had riveted on the people. What had brought that about? He entirely agreed with every word said by the mover, seconder, and supporters of the Amendment in regard to what he ventured to call the guilt of the late Viceroy of India, Lord Curzon. The other day the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wimbledon was reported to have said that the Chief Secretary for Ireland should be impeached. Why? Because he had been endeavouring to govern Ireland with sympathy, and to enlist the co-operation of the Irish people; and this, forsooth, was a deadly sin in the eyes of the right hon. Member for Wimbledon and his friends! If there was any Member of either House of Parliament who deserved impeachment, it was the late Viceroy of India, who, instead of having a seat in the House of Lords as a member of that body, ought to be indicted at the bar of that House. The whole of the present unrest and the craving for freedom from the present bureaucratic system of government was due almost entirely not only to the reactionary policy which the late Viceroy adopted, but also to his personal audacity and unfair treatment of the people of India. Other causes there undoubtedly were: the victory of the Japanese over the Russian armies; the entry of the Japanese nation into the sacred circle of the great Powers; the struggles of Persia towards representative institutions. There was one other moving cause, not perhaps known to many in this House, but of which he had the evidence of eye-witnesses; he referred to a propaganda in progress in India by a league of young Japanese whose watchword was "Asia for the Asiatics," "India for the Indians." All these causes united to maintain and stimulate what the mover of the Amendment described—and correctly described —as "the great national awakening"; but they equally showed that the impulse was feverish, and therefore abnormal. This was the point which he wished to make—the present condition was, to a great extent, abnormal, was due to causes some of which had, happily, been removed, and would gradually improve under the sympathetic and statesman-like administration of the present Viceroy, Lord Minto. What he would like to impress upon the right hon. Gentleman was that he ought to treat the present acute unrest as transient, and rather direct his mind to the necessity of reforms on quiet and cautious lines than to meet this extraordinary impulse by any extraordinary measures. He thought that the Advisory Council should be made more of a popular assembly than was contemplated. The improvement he would suggest was that the Council should have a considerable leaven of the popular element, and that it should have more weight than was at present intended to be given to it. It should not be merely a body to be consulted individually, but it should have extended powers, and become part of the Constitution of the Indian Government. The advisory body ought to be stiffened and strengthened by the incorporation of a number of commoners of the country. He was quite of opinion also that the Government of India would be greatly strengthened if a representative Indian gentleman were appointed to the Executive Council of the Viceroy. He really thought that it would go far to mitigate the present unrest, because then there would be the feeling among the people that there was somebody to represent them and to influence the Administration on their behalf. The feeling that they were now isolated from the governing body would be dissipated. Finally, he agreed with his hon. friend on the subject of the district boards. He thought that there should be an extension of the powers of those boards, and that the local collector and the magistrate should hand over to them certain powers which they now exercised. This would show a desire on the part of the Government of India to gradually enfranchise the people and to encourage them to manage their own affairs. He was of opinion that the reforms suggested would go very far to mitigate what he thought was the present abnormal condition of the country.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.) said he did not think that anyone who knew the present condition of India could be surprised at this Motion. Ever since he had come into the House he had been struck by the inadequacy of the opportunities for discussing Indian affairs within those walls. In the present condition of India it was very natural that they should grasp at every available opportunity of calling the attention of the House of Commons to the existing condition of things. He was surprised that there was such a small attendance in the House that day, and they could not be regarded as Imperialists in the true sense of the word until they recognised the importance of Indian affairs and thought it necessary to be present to take part in their discussion. As regarded the Motion, he was sure that everyone who knew his hon. friend, the mover, would recognise his sincerity in what he had done that day, and he was quite sure that his right hon. friend would consider carefully some of the important points which the hon. Gentle-had laid before the House. The first point made in the Motion was that the condition of India now seriously demanded the immediate attention of Parliament, and even the most superficial knowledge of Indian affairs would convince anybody of the serious need there was that the House of Commons should consider the present situation in India. No one doubted that in India at the present time there was much unrest, and a considerable amount of irritation and dissatisfaction. And to his mind one of the most essential conditions of removing these causes of irritation and discontent was the provision of machinery by which the mind of the House of Commons could be brought more directly into touch with Indian life and government. Personally he would like to emphasise the importance of the suggestion which had already been made in the debate, that a very useful purpose would be served if a Parliamentary Committee were appointed, to consist of Members drawn from each side of the House, with a view to their keeping in constant touch with the events and affairs of India and Indian life. In that way they would be able to render very real service in guiding the House of Commons in its deliberations with regard to India. In the opinion of those who supported the Motion, the proposed reforms which had recently been made by the Government of India, although very useful in their way and within their sphere of operation, were not adequate, indeed were totally inadequate, to meet the present situation. He for one desired to express his appreciation of those reforms, and of the leading part which the Secretary of State had taken in order to ensure that they should become of effect in Indian Government. All he wished to say was that they did not go far enough, and he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman in his speech would be able to say that it was his intention to consider whether a more definite advance could not be made along the road of giving the Indian people greater control over their own affairs. The last point referred to in the Motion was the necessity of going forward in the direction of local self-government in India. They could not remain where they were in regard to the government of India. They must go forward, as anyone knew who was aware of the constitutional party in India. They knew that the demands put forward were not unreasonable. It was not asked that they should at one step give full power of self-government. No one who knew India would imagine that such a step was possible under existing circumstances. All they asked was that they should be given a greater share in, and brought into closer association with, the local government and local control of their own affairs. He trusted that not only in the highest interests of India, but in the interests of this country and of the whole British Empire, the Secretary of State would be able to make some declaration which would give hope to those who at the present time were feeling considerable uneasiness at the condition of India. Let him say one word with regard to the Indian National Congress. Since the unhappy incident which took place at the last meeting, and which one certainly deplored, he noticed that in certain directions the Press of this country were condemning the institution of the Congress. He was one of those who believed that the movement behind the Congress in India had rendered, and would render, distinguished services to the State. It had been in the past not only instrumental in getting Indian opinion expressed upon constitutional lines in regard to progress on matters of government, but it had also been a safety valve, a moderating influence, in agitation for reform in many directions. He hoped that his right hon. friend that afternoon would be able to say something which would strengthen the constitutional party of progress in India, for it would help them in the future on the old road of legitimate reform. Nothing would alter his conviction that it was possible to make India in relation to this country not only the proudest gem in Britain's "orient diadem," but to strengthen the foundations of that Empire. He supported the resolution.

MR. MORLEY (who was very indistinctly heard): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, I think the House will allow me in the remarks which I wish to make, to refer to a communication which I had received, namely, the decision arrived at by the Transvaal Government in respect to the question of Asiatics. Everybody in the House is aware of the enormous interest, even passionate interest which has been taken in this subject, especially in India, and for very good reasons. Without further preface let me say, this is the statement received by Lord Elgin from the Government of the Transvaal last night:—"Gandhi and other leaders of the Indian and Chinese communities have offered voluntary registration in a body within three months, provided signatures only are taken of educated, propertied, or well-known Asiatics, and finger-prints of the others, and that no question against which Asiatics have religious objections be pressed. The Transvaal Government have accepted this offer, and undertaken, pending registration, not to enforce the penalties under the Act against all those who register. The sentences of all Asiatics in prison will be remitted tomorrow." Lord Selborne adds "This course was agreed to by both political parties." I am sure that everybody in the House will think that very welcome news. I do not like to let the matter drop without saying a word—I am sure Lord Elgin would like me to say it—in recognition of the good spirit which the Transvaal Government has shown from the beginning in this very troublesome and difficult episode, and the good end which they have accelerated. In reference to the Amendment now before the House, I have listened to the debate with very keen, lively, and close interest. I am not one of those who have ever complained of these grave topics being raised whenever opportunity offered in this House. On the whole, looking back over my Parliamentary lifetime, which is now pretty long, I think there has been far too little Indian discussion. Before I came there were powerful minds like Mr. Fawcett and Mr. Bradlaugh and others who did raise Indian questions in a very serious and practical way, though I do not at all commit myself to the various points of view that were then adopted. But, of course, this is a vote of confidence. I am not going to ask members to vote for the Government on that ground. But I do submit that His Majesty's present Government in the Indian department has the confidence both of this House and of the country. I think we have. A very important suggestion was made by my hon. friend now sitting below the gangway that a Parliamentary Committee should sit—I presume a joint committee of the two Houses—and my hon. friend who spoke last said that the fact of the existence of that committee would bring Parliament into closer contact with the mind of India. Well, ever since I have been at the India Office I have rather inclined in the direction of one of the old Parliamentary Committees, but I will not argue the question now. I can only assure my hon. friend that the question has been considered by me, and I see what its advantages might be, but I also perceive very serious disadvantages that there might also be. In those old days they were able to command the services on those Indian committees of ex-Ministers, of members of this House and members of another place who had had great experience of administration of one sort and another, and I am doubtful, considering the preoccupations of public men, whether we should now be able to call a large body of experienced administrators to sit on one of those committees. And then I would point out another disadvantage. You would have to call away from the performance of their duties in India a great body of men whose duties ought to occupy, and I believe do occupy, all their minds and all their time. But it is an idea, and I do not entirely banish it from my own mind. Two very interesting speeches, very significant speeches, have been made this afternoon. One was made by my hon. friend the mover, and the other by the hon. Member for East Leeds. Those two speeches, in my respectful judgment, raise a very important issue. I will explain my meaning. My hon. friend the Member for Leeds said that democracy was entirely opposed to, and would resist, the doctrine of the settled fact. My hon. friend says democracy will have nothing to do with settled facts, though he did not quite put it as broadly as that. Now, if that be so, I am very sorry for democracy. I do not agree with my hon. friend. I think democracy will be just as reasonable as any other sensible form of government, and I do not believe democracy will for a moment think that you are to rip up a settlement of an administrative or constitutional question because it jars with some abstract *a priori* idea. I for one certainly say that I would not remain at the India Office, or any other great and responsible Departmental office, on condition that I made short work of settled facts, and brought in my catalogue of first principles, and arranged the duties of government on those principles. No; nothing would induce me to do it; I would cut off my right hand rather than I would go into any administrative office on any such principles. Then there is my hon. friend the Member for Brentford. My hon. friend quoted an expression of mine used in a speech in the country about the impatient idealists, and he reproved me for saying that some of the worst tragedies of history had been wrought by the impatient idealists. He was kind enough to say that it was I, among other people, who had made him an idealist, and therefore I ought not to be ashamed of my spiritual and intellectual progeny. I certainly have no right whatever to say that I am ashamed of my hon. friend, who made a speech full of interesting views, full of visions of a possible future, and I do not quarrel with him for making that speech. I thought it very interesting, and I believe—I will make my hon. friend a present of this—that those views are not at all without support among the people of this country. My hon. friend said that he was for an Imperial Duma. The hon. Gentleman has had the advantage of a visit to India, which I have never had. I think he was there for six whole weeks. His Imperial Duma was to be elected, as I understood, by universal suffrage.

DR. RUTHERFORD: No, not universal suffrage. I said educational suffrage, and also pecuniary suffrage—taxpayers and ratepayers.

MR. MORLEY: In the same speech the hon. Gentleman made a great charge against our system of education in India —that we had not educated them at all; therefore, he excludes at once an enormous part of the population. The Imperial Duma, as I understood from my hon. friend, was to be subject to the veto of the Viceroy. That is not democracy. We are to send out from Great Britain once in five years a Viceroy who is to be confronted by an Imperial Duma, just as the Tsar is confronted by the Duma in Russia. Well, that is not my idea of a democracy. My hon. friend visited the State of Baroda, and thought it well governed. Well, there is no Duma there. I will speak quite frankly my own opinion. If I had to frame a new system of government for India, I declare I would multiply the Baroda system of government rather than have an Imperial Duma and universal suffrage. The speech of my hon. friend with whom I am sorry to find myself, not in collision, but in difference, illustrates what is to my mind one of the grossest of all the fallacies in practical politics—namely, that you can cut out, frame, and shape a system of government for communities with absolutely different sets of social, religious, and economic conditions—that you can cut them all out by a sort of standardized pattern and say that what is good for us here, the point of view, the line of argument, the method of solution—that all these things are to be applied right off to a community like India. I must tell my hon. friend that I think that is a most fatal and mischievous fallacy, and I need not say more. I am bound, after what I have said, to say that I do not think that it is at all involved in Liberalism. I have had the great good fortune and honour and privilege to have known some of the great Liberals of my time, and there was not one of those great men, Gambetta, Bright, Gladstone, anybody you like, who would have accepted for one single moment the doctrine on which my hon. friend really bases his visionary proposition for a Duma. Is there any rational man who says that if you can lay down political principles and maxims of government that apply equally to Scotland or to England, or to Ireland, or to France, or to Spain, therefore they must be true for the Punjab and the United Provinces?

DR. RUTHERFORD: I quoted Mr. Bright as making the very proposal I have made, with the exception of the Duma—namely, Provincial Parliaments.

MR. MORLEY: I am afraid I must traverse my hon. friend's description of Mr. Bright's view, with which, I think, I am pretty well acquainted. Mr. Bright was, I believe, on the right track at the time in 1858 when the Government of India was transferred to the Crown; but I do not think he was a man very much for Imperial Dumas. He was not in favour of universal suffrage—he was rather old-fashioned—but Mr. Bright's proposal was perfectly different from that of my hon. friend. Sir Henry Maine and others who had been concerned with Indian affairs came to the conclusion that Mr. Bright's idea was right—that to put one man, a Viceroy, assisted as he might be with an effective Executive Council, in charge of such an area as India and its 300 millions of population, with all its different races, creeds, modes of thought, was to put on one man's shoulder a load which no man, of whatever powers, however gigantic they might be, could be expected effectively to deal with. My hon. friend and others who sometimes favour me with criticisms in the same sense seem to suggest that I am a false brother, that I do not know what Liberalism is. I think I do, and I will even say that I do not think I have anything to learn of the principles or maxims, aye, or of the practice, of Liberal doctrines even from my hon. friend. You have got to look at the whole mass of the great difficulties and perplexing problems connected with India from a common-sense plane, and it is not common sense, if I may say so without discourtesy, to talk of Imperial Dumas. I have not had a word of thanks from anybody, in the midst of the present shower of reproach, for what I regard, in all its direct and indirect results and bearings, as one of the most important moves that has been made in connection with the relations between Great Britain and India for a long time—namely, the admission of two Indian gentlemen to the Council of the Secretary of State. An hon. friend wants me to appoint an Indian gentleman to the Viceroy's Executive Council. Well, that is a different thing; but I am perfectly sure that, if an occasion offers, neither Lord Minto nor I would fall short of some such application of democratic principles. The Viceroy I have found as eager for reform and improvement, as acute in reading the situation which has been described so eloquently by some of my hon. friends to-night, as any of us. In itself it is something that we have a Viceroy and a Secretary of State thoroughly alive to the great change in temperature and atmosphere that has been going on in India for the last five or six years, and I do not think we ought to be too impatiently judged. We came in at a rather perturbed time; we did not come into perfectly smooth waters. It is notorious that we came into enormous difficulties which we had not created. How they were created is a long story which has nothing whatever to do with the present discussion. But what I submit with the utmost confidence is that the situation to-day is an enormous and extraordinary improvement on the situation which we found when we came into office two years ago. There have been heavy and black clouds over the Indian horizon during those two years. By our policy those clouds have been gradually dispersed. I am not so unwise as to say that the clouds will never come back again. Nobody who has ever thought at close quarters of the relations between India and this country would ever say that we will never have great banks of cloud again. It cannot be otherwise; but what has been done by us has been justified, in my opinion, by the event.

Some fault was found, and I do not in the least wonder at it, with the deportation of two native gentlemen. I do not quarrel with the man who finds fault with that proceeding. To take anybody and deport him without bringing any charge against him, and with no intention of bringing him to trial is a thing which, I think, the House is perfectly justified in calling me to account for. I have done my best to account for it, and to-day, any one who knows the Punjab, would agree that, whatever may happen at some remote period, its state is exceedingly quiet and satisfactory. I am not going to repeat my justification of that very strong measure of deportation, but I should like to read to the House the words of the Viceroy in the Legislative Council in November last, when he was talking to the Legislative Council about those circumstances. He said, addressing Lord Kitchener—

> "I hope that your Excellency will on my behalf as Viceroy and as representing the King convey to His Majesty's Indian troops my thanks for the contempt with which they have received the disgraceful overtures which I know have been made to them. The seeds of sedition have been unscrupulously scattered throughout India, even amongst the hills of the frontier tribes. We are grateful that they have fallen on much barren ground, but we can no longer allow their dissemination."

Will anybody say that, in view of the possible danger pointed to in that language of the Viceroy two or three months ago, we did wrong in using the regulation which applied to the case? No one can say what mischief might have followed if we had taken any other course than that which we took.

Now as to the reforms that are mentioned in my hon. friend's Amendment. It is rather an extraordinary Amendment. It—

> "submits that the present condition of affairs in India demands the immediate and serious attention of His Majesty's Government."

I can cordially vote for that, only remarking that the hon. Member must think the Secretary of State, and the Viceroy, and other persons immediately concerned in the Government of India very curious persons if he supposes that the state of affairs in India does not always demand their immediate and very serious attention. Then the Amendment says—

> "The present proposals of the Government of India are inadequate to allay the existing and growing discontent."

I hope it is not presumptuous to say so, but I should have expected a definition from my hon. friend of what he thinks these proposals are. I should like to set a little examination paper to my hon. friend. I have studied them a great deal, but would rather not be examined for chapter and verse; but my hon. friend after his travels of six weeks knows all about them and the state of affairs for which they are the inadequate remedy. I do not want to hold him up as a formidable example; but in his speech to-day he went over—and it does credit to his industry—every single one of the most burning and controversial questions of the whole system of Indian Government and seemed to say, "I will declare how far this is wrong and what ought to be done with so-and-so." I think I have got from him twenty *ipse dixits* on all these topics on which we at the India Office are wearing ourselves to pieces. I can assure the hon. Gentleman that in dealing with India you will fare very ill if you do not listen to the experts. When it is said, as I often hear it said, that I, for example, am falling into the hands of our officials, it should be remembered that those gentlemen who go to India get into the hands of other people.

DR. RUTHERFORD: I was in the hands both of officials and of Indians.

MR. MORLEY: Then he came out of the hands of both of them still with something to learn. I wonder whether, when this House is asked to condemn the present proposals of the Government of India as being inadequate to allay the existing and growing discontent, it is realised exactly how the case stands. I will repeat what I said in the debate on the Indian Budget as to how the case stands. The Government of India sent over to the India Office their proposals—their various schemes for advisory councils and so forth. We at the India Office subjected them to a careful scrutiny and laborious examination. As a result of this careful scrutiny and examination, they were sent back to the Government of India with the request that they would submit them to discussion in various quarters. The instruction to the Government of India was that by the end of March the India Office was to hear what the general view was at which the Government of India had themselves arrived upon all those plans, complexities, and important variations. We wanted to know what they would tell us. It will be for us to consider how far the report so arrived at, how far these proposals ripened by Indian opinion, carried out the policy which His Majesty's Government had in view. Surely that is a reasonable and simple way of proceeding? When you have to deal with complex communities of varied races, and all the other peculiarities of India, you have to think out how your proposals will work. Democracies do not always think how things will work. My hon. friend the Member for East Nottinghamshire made a speech which interested me and struck me by its moderation and reasonableness. He made a number of remarks in perfect good faith about officials which I received in a chastened spirit, for he has been for a very long time a very distinguished official himself. Therefore, he knows all about it. He went on to talk of the great problem of the separation of the executive and judicial functions, which is one of the vital problems of India. I can only assure my hon. friend that that is engaging our attention both in India and here. It may fall to my lot at some future time to speak of it. One of the subjects to which the attention of the Indian Government has been specifically directed has regard to the mitigation of flogging, the restriction of civil flogging, and the limitation of military flogging to specific cases. My hon. friend appeals to me saying that all will be well in India if the Secretary of State will make a statement which will show the Indian people that, in his relations with them, his hopes for them, and his efforts for them, he is moved by a kindly, sympathetic, and friendly feeling, showing them that his heart is with them. All I have got to say is that I have never shown myself anything else. My heart is with them. What is bureaucracy to me? To me it is a great machine in India, rather a splendid machine, for performing the most difficult task that ever was committed to the charge of any nation. But show me where it fails—that it is perfect in every respect no sensible man would contend for a moment—but show me at any point, let any of my hon. friends show me from day to day as this session passes, where this bureaucracy, as they call it, has been at fault. Do they suppose it possible that I will not show my recognition of that fault and do all that I can to remedy it? Although the Government of India is very complicated and intricate, they cannot suppose that I shall fail for one moment in doing all in my power to demonstrate to those who live in India that I am moved by a kindly, a sympathetic, and a friendly spirit.

*SIR J. JARDINE (Roxburghshire) said it was satisfactory to know that the suggestion for a Committee on Indian affairs was still before the mind of his right hon. friend, and he hoped that until this matter was settled opportunity would be afforded as often as possible for the discussion in the House of subjects relating to India. This was the more necessary in view of the great intellectual and social changes of recent years. He was sure he was speaking the views of his colleagues connected with India, whether as officials or in other pursuits, when he cordially thanked the Secretary of State for appointing two native gentlemen from India, one a Hindu, the other a Mussulman to be members of his advisory council at Westminster. He thought hon. Members ought to be grateful for what had been done in regard to the abolition of flogging. That change was brought about by the right hon. Gentleman soon after he came into office. After the statement of the Secretary of State, he would not go into other matters raised by the Amendment. In regard to the deportations, it was to be remembered that this mild action under the Regulation of 1818, was action taken in due course of law, not by arbitrary suspension of ordinary law, nor as sometimes happened, by proclaiming martial law, to over-ride the ordinary law in districts where the peace was undisturbed. India was not to be considered merely as one country; it was an empire containing many countries, as diverse as Sweden, Greece and Spain, and there was always some unrest, disquiet and discontent with which the Regulation could deal, and it was a method of avoiding greater danger arising from the action of nervous local authorities who sometimes, as after the Kuka rebellion in the Punjab resorted to bloodshed without any warrant of law, a procedure strongly censured at the time by the Government of Lord Mayo.

*MR. C. J. O'DONNELL (Newington, Walworth) said he sincerely congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on the result of the course taken by the Government when a great wrong was done to Indians in the Transvaal, but he could not but remember that the difficulty had continued for six months. The partition of Bengal was only two months old when the Government came into office, and it certainly would not have interfered with the progress of administration had the new ministry dealt with the subject at once. He entirely agreed with the Secretary of State for India that a Duma, or any form of representative government, was impossible at present in India. He desired, however, to say that he wished to see Indians introduced more and more into the Government. What the principles of Liberalism involved was good government, and, above all, the removal of real grievances. There were two great grievances which had been causing trouble in India during the past three years. One was the partition of Bengal, and the right hon. Gentleman had steadily and firmly refused to approach that question. There was abundant evidence that the partition of Bengal was radically bad, both from native and official points of view. As to the Punjab, it was true that there had been a trivial attempt to interfere with the Sikh regiments, but the real reason for interfering was that the peasantry, who were principally concerned, were Sikh peasantry and that there had been a great increase in the taxation on land and in the rates for irrigation. What was the result? Six barristers were in prison for five months on a charge of sedition, and at last they had got out. The court which dealt with the case had declared that the evidence against the men was untrustworthy and malicious. They should be proud that there was a court in India which could tell the Government that it had based its action on evidence which was untrustworthy. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman that he had his sincerest sympathy in the difficult task he had before him; but he begged him not to worry himself about changes in the Council here, or about a new Legislative Assembly. Let the right hon. Gentleman get to the real grievances of the people and reform them, and he would find that his administration of India would be remembered with gratitude by the people of that great country and of England.

DR. RUTHERFORD asked leave to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question again proposed.

*MR. J. M. ROBERTSON (Northumberland, Tyneside) said that the Amendment which stood in his name in reference to Constitutional Reform in Egypt raised a subject very closely connected in theory, and to a certain extent in practice, with the resolution which had just been under discussion, and he could not help looking at it in the light of the impressive remarks made during that debate by his right hon. friend the Secretary of State for India. That right hon. Gentleman had declared very justly that it was impossible to lay down the principle that the system of government which ruled in this country or other States of Europe, was also good for Asiatics or countries of various stages in civilisation. But, he ventured to suggest that while that was so, the right government for an Asiatic or any other State not on our level of civilisation, was not to be settled by rule of thumb by the bureaucracy of the moment, or by the convenience of the administrators of the moment, but should be adjusted on the principles of right and wrong and political science, whatever these might be. It was not for him to lecture Liberal Ministers on Liberalism, but he hoped right hon. Gentlemen would admit that there never was an extension of political rights and political freedom made to any people in the world by the mere spontaneous goodwill of the ruling class for the time being; and when a bureaucracy took the place of the ruling class the same egotistic Conservatism was sure to be exhibited, and could only be met by the natural pressure and free play of the opinion of the people who demanded their rights. What he wanted to know was, what were the principles and ideals of the Government with regard to Egypt or any other Oriental country He did but ask the Government to accede to the very respectful demands of the Egyptian General Assembly for the adoption of constitutional reforms, which had been forecasted twenty times by His Majesty's representatives in Egypt or by their predecessors. They knew that the

British Consul-General had expressed himself in explicit terms as to its being the duty of the British Government to prepare the Egyptians for self-government. He naturally welcomed such a declaration as that, but he remembered that similar declarations, though not so pronounced, were made by Lord Cromer for a long series of years without any single step whatever being taken to give effect to these proposals and ideas. The government of Egypt remained practically where it was when Lord Cromer took it up so far as any constitutional reform was concerned. The steps suggested by the General Assembly had always been guarded and moderate, but never had there been an answer to these appeals. Commenting on some remarks made by the hon. Member for Brentford in a discussion in August last, the Foreign Secretary laid down two propositions, viz., that there was nothing more difficult to teach than the art of self-government, and that it was impossible to teach the art of self-government. Those two propositions were a little odd coming together. He might readily assent to both; but did the right hon. Gentleman realise the consequences which flowed from these two general propositions? If it were impossible to teach self-government to any people the corollary was that you should let them learn. There was plainly no other way; and if the right hon. Gentleman would not allow the Egyptians to learn the art of self-government he was taking up a position irreconcilable with the principles of Liberalism. If the right hon. Gentleman meant that no people could make rapid progress in the art of self-government—that our race itself made very slow progress—that was true enough. But other races, like ourselves, should be allowed to evolve. If a child could not be taught to swim on the land let it, with proper precaution, get into the water. That was the whole question in regard to Egypt. The unfortunate thing was that while under the able administration of Lord Cromer the people of Egypt had been well managed and had been relieved of certain forms of mis-government, they were not being led along the line or in the direction of self-government. One or two main facts would make his contention clear. In the Report of the year before last it was declared and lamented that crime was extending in Egypt. Some gentlemen who made a passing visit as tourists resented the statement, which, however, was made officially, and Captain Machel went on to explain that the increase of crime in Egypt was due to the prosperity of the people, which was one of the things for which we claimed special credit. Was there anyone in the House who would admit that real progress was made by any people if they were not advancing morally as well as materially? It had been said that "where there is no vision the people perish." That was a maxim of universal experience; and would the fact that the material prosperity of Egypt had increased be a vindication of a Government which did not promote its moral advancement as well? According to all accounts progress was being made in education, but there was an increase in crime, and that under a *régime* which claimed to be the best the people ever had. He did not deny the material advantages which the people of Egypt had derived from our rule, as regarded freedom from old forms of tyranny, and the increase of material prosperity. On the other hand, the death-rate was increasing, and sanitary progress was deplorably slow. He wished to press the point that Great Britain was committed by a whole series of declarations to the principle that there should be some gradual, guarded, and reasonable progress towards self-government in Egypt; but his objection was that no progress was yet being made in that direction, and it seemed to him that that was due to the uncalculating confidence of the people of this country in the administration of Lord Cromer. They cared so much more for finance than anything else that they took it for granted that a Minister who was so capable in finance was as capable in everything else. That was a most fallacious assumption. The opponents of Mr. Gladstone, whose quasi-infallibility in finance was admitted, would never for a moment concede that he could be trusted fully to administer in other directions. The discovery had been made by tariff reformers that Lord Cromer, since he had entered into home politics and had given his opinions in regard to free trade, was not infallible, and the same discovery had been made by free traders in regard to his opinions on old age pensions. It was found that after all Lord Cromer was only a

British politician. Questions put to Ministers on the Front Bench constantly took it for granted that it was impossible to trust a single Minister a single day to carry on the work of his office without the supervision of Parliament, and the power of questioning and cross-questioning. He remembered on the opening days of last session that hon. Members opposite dealt with the Home Secretary on the plain assumption that he could not be trusted to do justice in the case of a foreign person without being sharply cross-questioned; and the suggestion was made that he was equivocating when he gave his answers. Members implied by questions that no Minister could be trusted, no matter what his antecedents and reputation, without vigorous and rigorous and constant interpellation; and yet when the humblest Minister went to a country like Egypt he could be trusted to any extent! He could not be trusted in England, but when he was put to govern a race whose language he might not know—he admitted that Sir Eldon Gorst knew the language of the Egyptians—with whose religion and other institutions he had no sympathy, and whose society he never entered, it was taken for granted that he would do justice all round to the people over whom he was set. He maintained that this was an attitude of profound insincerity. Either they were pretending to a lack of confidence in their own Ministers which they did not feel, or they had no right to give *carte blanche* to govern aliens without the power of criticism. These two attitudes were irreconcilable. The right hon. Gentleman the Foreign Secretary had more than once indicated his opinion in regard to the administration of Egypt, that they should take care to choose a good man as Governor or administrator, and then leave him a free hand. Of course he recognised the difficulties of the right hon. Gentleman's position. He might well plead that our officials might make mistakes, and he trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would admit that they were not infallible. Further, if the British control was imperfectly fitted to govern Egypt, the Foreign Office was certainly less fitted still. His contention was that the Foreign Office was not as well fitted to govern Egypt as the Egyptians themselves, and that the Intelligence Department for these purposes was not well qualified. If that were so, it was another argument for setting up some other form of control, and letting the people of Egypt have some say in the management of their own affairs. He did not propose the immediate concession of full Parliamentary institutions, but, if they were really to extend the powers of the people to control the Government, they ought to give them some powers of initiation. As to what might be said in regard to the fitness of the people of Egypt for self-government, no hesitation had been felt in giving such powers to the people of Greece, Bulgaria, Servia, nor had these been denied to the people of Persia. All that was asked was that the institutions already existing in Egypt should be so expanded as to involve some real power of control, and that they should not remain mere figureheads. In this connection he wished to put another point. It was a maxim current throughout Egypt, and indeed in all bureaucracies, that what was needed above all things in the people was character. He agreed; but how was character to be developed in any nation except by some measure of self-government? Every empire which went to ruin was under the power of "experts," and that would continue to be the case unless they could get experts in human nature, and he did not know where they existed. In the absence of such, they must take the universal way. On the ground that we ought to do what we could to develope character in Egypt — and the same thing might be said of India—he made the appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to urge upon the British Consul-General in Egypt the great expediency of meeting the moderate demands of the General Assembly in Egypt. with a view to developing gradually and prudently in the people of Egypt that capacity for self-government which alone could make a nation worth consideration in human affairs. He begged to move.

*MR. HIGHAM (Yorkshire, W.R., Sowerby) seconded the Amendment, and said that for twenty-five years we had had the management of the affairs of Egypt, and both our Consul-Generals had told us that we were not there primarily to govern Egypt, but to teach Egypt to govern itself. And yet, after twenty-five years, we found that self-government by Egyptians was, indeed, even further away now than it was at the beginning. In

1883 Lord Dufferin himself said the best, and probably the only, training to fit a man in Egypt for national government was local government, and yet he thought a score of years had passed before any effort was made to give the Egyptians that training in local government in order to fit them for national government. Nobody could read the history of Egypt for the last twenty-five years without knowing that we had brought enormous wealth into the country. We had made vast improvements, and our finest engineers had gone there and had by their work greatly increased the resources of the country. We had made land twenty times the value that it was before, and yet Lord Cromer told us that the men, the landowners, who had become wealthy were selected by the working people and others to be delegates, and upon these delegates devolved the responsibility of electing the provincial and national councils. But these delegates were ignorant to-day, were not educated, and we were no nearer to the solving of the problem of local self-government in Egypt than we were before. Ever since the loss of our American Colonies and ever since we had recognised the way in which we had treated Ireland, we had realised that we ought not to take out of our Colonies a profit for ourselves; and if he were to hold up to the Secretary of State an example of what we could do in Egypt, he would refer him to the West Coast of Africa, to Southern Nigeria. There, we were lifting up the natives by educating them, and we were adapting our teaching and training to native customs and habits, which was the only way we could properly manage these native countries. But we had not been doing that in Egypt and with the native population of Egypt. If local government was a first necessity for national government, and if, as Lord Cromer said again, education was a first necessity for local government, then we ought in twenty-five years to have done infinitely more to advance education in order to assist the people to undertake local government. In the Report last year, the Consul-General stated that the main vote for education must be subsidiary to the general Budget of the country. He thought that was the wrong way to look at education. We had got beyond it in this country, and we ought to go beyond it in our dependencies. With so prosperous a Budget as Egypt now had, he thought that a much larger sum than £374,000 should be spent upon the education of the people. It was recognised to-day that some of the best men who came into this House, had come from a training progressively in parish councils, district councils, city councils, and from the municipal life of the country, and he agreed with Lord Dufferin that that was the way that these men must come into the national life of Egypt. But we were not giving them a chance, and that was the complaint he had to make of the administration of Egypt. He recognised that there had been an improvement of the fellaheen and that the corvee had been abolished, and that now we only employed forced labour in Egypt in time of plague and pestilence. But these matters were still in the hands of ignorant people. We had given wealth to that country but we had not given the knowledge of how to use it, without which wealth was not a blessing but did more harm than good. He begged to second the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"At end to add the words, 'But we regret that, while views favourable to constitutional reform in Egypt have been expressed by the British Consul-General there, your Majesty's Ministers have not enjoined upon him the duty of granting the respectful demand of the General Assembly that former forecasts of such reform by your Majesty's representatives should now be fulfilled.'"—(*Mr. J. M. Robertson.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): The hon. Member who moved the Amendment criticised a speech of mine made some time ago for what he held was a contradiction contained in it. The speech was made without previous preparation, and I have not read a report of it since it was delivered. I am quite prepared to admit that there may have been a verbal contradiction in that speech. The hon. Member said I stated that it was a difficult thing to teach the art of self-government, and that I also said it was impossible. I do not dispute the accuracy of the report if the hon. Member tells me it is so. Of course, all I intended to say was that you cannot teach the art of self-government in the same sense as you can teach arithmetic or a definite piece of knowledge which you can test by examination afterwards. I am entirely at one with the hon. Member if the point which he wishes to make is that the art of self-government is not something which can be taught out of a book, or taught in a day, a week, or a month, but something the growth of which can be fostered by the spirit of the Government and institutions of a country. The hon. Member for Tyneside devoted some attention to what he called the imperfections of the administration in Egypt, and he attributed them, I think, to the shortcomings of the bureaucracy and officials. If the point he desires to make is that the bureaucracy and officials are not infallible, we must all agree with him, as we should agree that no other class of people are infallible. But what I do say on their behalf is that they are people through whom the government of the country has to be carried on; that they have to contend with very great difficulties; and that, if you get into the habit of imputing to them that they are invariably wrong, or that they are ill-disposed, you will, unless the balance is redressed from the Government Bench or by whoever is responsible for the acts of officials, soon create such a spirit in the public service that no self-respecting man will enter it. The question is not, therefore, whether officials are infallible or not. We know perfectly well that the play of public opinion, the debates in this House—if those debates are reasonable in tone and informed by knowledge—have a valuable effect; but I do plead, that when you say there are imperfections of administration, very sympathetic allowance should be made for the great difficulties under which administration has to be carried on. By what standard is it fair to judge an administration? Certainly not by the European standard. I think the fair standard to judge by is, in the first instance, the enormous improvement which has been made since the European occupation. Comparing that with the standard of what existed in Egypt before we went there, everyone will admit that the improvement is enormous. In the next place, the Government of Egypt is hampered by conditions connected with the capitulations such as no white Government in the world labours under, and which, I think, are more severe in the case of Egypt than in the case of any Oriental Government. And till you have made allowance for all these difficulties, until you have taken into account what was the starting point of the British occupation, the state of things the British occupation had to deal with which they found existing in Egypt—till you have compared the present and the past and made the proper and necessary allowances, you cannot form a fair opinion of the very great success which has been achieved under the British occupation. Lord Cromer at the very first took sound finance as the basis of future reforms. Twenty-five years from the time when Egypt was on the point of bankruptcy is not a very long time, and if the hon. Member is dissatisfied with the amount now spent upon education, I am cordially with him in desiring that the amount should be increased; but I ask him to recollect that the necessities of Egypt have to be borne in mind, from more than one point of view, and I hope he will accept the fact that an increase has been made in the amount spent upon education as an evidence of the importance attached by the Government of Egypt to the subject, and of its desire, if the financial situation admits of it, to increase that amount. And now as regards the larger point of principle. I agree with the hon. Member for Tyneside that there is great similarity as regards the complex principle of self government between Egypt and India, and much of what my right hon. friend the Secretary for India said really might have been just as appropriate to the amendment we are now discussing. Now to apply an *a priori* doctrine without special regard to the peculiar conditions of a country is certain to lead to one of the gravest mistakes that can occur in the art of government; and when I say "without special regard to the peculiar conditions of a country," I mean not only the geographical features but the race which inhabits the country and its present state. Representative institutions in European countries have produced, no doubt, admirable results, but even so they have taken time to do it, and they have produced those results by slow growth. Truth, justice, honesty, moral courage, self-respect, all that goes to make up what we call character, I think we are right in attributing what we value most in national life to-day to the growth of self-government in our country. But it does not follow that if you at once equip an Oriental country with representative institutions like our own, the same results will follow when you apply them to another country, another race, in another stage of development altogether. And in regard to the people of Egypt, the stage of development fromwhich they have just emerged is very different from that of our country. The past government of Egypt, for which you have to go back twenty five years, was such as was necessarily calculated to crush out every quality in the race which is most essential to the exercise of self-government, and if you try to apply too rapidly to a race which has been crushed, as the Egyptian race was before the British occupation, your principles of self-government, the result may very well be that you will produce not the effects we attribute to self-government in this country, but corruption, confusion, disorder, and oppression. Take for instance Lord Cromer's administration. One of the things to which Lord Cromer devoted the greatest care was that the increase of the material prosperity of Egypt should not get into the hands of a few, but should be distributed amongst the cultivators of the country. No one was more careful than Lord Cromer to ensure that in the development of Egypt it should not be possible for the speculator to exploit the wealth of the country to the disadvantage of the occupying cultivator. I doubt if material prosperity in Egypt would have advanced under representative institutions as it has done under the administration of Lord Cromer; and I am sure the speculator who would have exploited the resources of the country would have done far more mischief than he found it possible to do under the wise and careful administration of Lord Cromer. While representative institutions are exceedingly good for those who are able to take care of themselves, there is a real danger in applying them to a peasantry who by education and training have not yet had any opportunities of acquiring the qualities which will enable them to make use of self-government to protect themselves. If the hon. member contends that the time has come when Parliamentary institutions and representative government should be granted in Egypt——

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON: All I said had reference to the demand of the General Assembly.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I am trying to find out where the difference lies between us.

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON: May I point out that the terms of the Amendment suggest that the demand of the General Assembly should be favourably considered?

SIR EDWARD GREY: The hon. Member admits that the time for Parliamentary institutions has not come.

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON: I have always said that the time for the establishment of our system of representative institutions has not yet come, and it seems to me that much of the argument to the contrary is unnecessary. I never dreamt that our British system should be applied to Egypt straight away.

SIR EDWARD GREY: Then, if that be so, the difference of opinion which exists between the Government and the hon. Member is only a difference of degree. And now I come to what the actual situation is under Sir Eldon Gorst. Let me say at once that Sir Eldon Gorst, who went out to Egypt to continue Lord Cromer's policy, has given justification for saying that he promises to realise in the fullest degree what were the hopes and confidence shared by Lord Cromer. He has been in the country some nine months, he has had to acquaint himself during that time, not only with Egypt, but with the Sudan; and, when you reflect that during those nine months he has had to fill the gap left by the great personality of Lord Cromer and all that that means, surely nine months is not a very long time in which to come to important decisions. The hon. Member pressed upon me many points connected with the Egyptian administration. If when Sir Eldon Gorst went to Egypt with the task before him of taking up Lord Cromer's work I had burdened him with all the points raised by the hon. Member, it would have made it absolutely impossible for him to attend to the large affairs of the country. Some of the points so raised have, I know, occupied the attention of Sir Eldon Gorst. But I deliberately have not pressed him with instructions during the time he has been in Egypt because I want his opinion and advice to be formed impartially and with such leisure as he can get. I expect to get that opinion in the report, which will be laid before Parliament at the usual time within the year. As far as I am concerned I should be entirely unworthy of the position I occupy if I had attempted to enforce a decision with regard to any new departure without waiting till Sir Eldon Gorst had had a fair opportunity of forming his own opinions, and I had had the benefit of those opinions. One of the first things that Sir Eldon Gorst will have to form a considered opinion upon is the working of the existing representative institutions. They must be the starting point, and I should like to have that opinion first before we are committed to further steps. I admit that we occupy Egypt in trust for the future of the country, and a part of the trust is to develop the aptitude, abilities, and character of the people so as to fit them, not only to make good use of their material prosperity, but to take in the course of years, their share in the government of their own country, to train them in respect of the institutions of the country, in every possible way to develop the natural faculties that they have. But the first point to which we have to address ourselves is to start with the working of existing representative institutions; and, in my opinion we must begin from below. If the hon. Gentleman desires an assurance that treated from that point of view the subject is occupying the attention of the Egyptian Government—I am quite willing to give it to him. But I warn the House that in the case of Egypt progress must be slow. We shall hold to the trust which devolves upon us to develop the prosperity and the moral welfare of Egypt, but progress must necessarily be slow. If you go too fast it can only end in confusion, and you will check progress for many years to come. That is the object to appreciate, and in the meanwhile progress must be slow, or we must lose all the British influence which ensures that the Government of Egypt, though administered by a bureaucracy, is administered in a just, kind, and humane manner.

*MR. MORTON (Sutherlandshire) said he admitted that his right hon. friend had made a very important statement with regard to the government of Egypt, but he would like to point out that it was the same sort of statement which came from all Governments with regard to the governing of foreign peoples. They seemed to pat each other on the back and say, "see what fine follows we are at governing other peoples." He would prefer to see the Government governing our own people better, and he would like to see them do something for Ireland. Until they could show that they could govern Ireland, he for one, would not have much faith in their government of Egypt. It must be remembered that we did not go to Egypt for the benefit of the Egyptian people. We went to get the Egyptian bonds paid. [Laughter.] Hon. Gentlemen laughed; perhaps they had some of those lucky bonds. There were many millions of Egyptian bonds, more than half of which had been stolen from the Egyptian people, and we went to Egypt in the first place to save that money, and to make the poor Egyptians pay the bonds in full, although they had had little for them. He could not for the life of him see that we had been successful in Egypt except in paying those bonds, which meant robbing the Egyptian people. If the Government had intended to make an honest attempt to teach the Egyptians self-government they should have commenced by giving them some measure of local self-government in the large towns. He quite agreed that we could not expect the Egyptians to be qualified to work a Parliamentary system such as obtained in this country, but they never would be able to do so until a commencement was made to train them by means of local self-government in their own country. He could not see that we were in any better position now in Egypt than we were when we went there twenty-five years ago. To summarise the position: we went to Egypt twenty-five years ago, not to help the people—that was not even pretended—we went there to make the poor Egyptians pay the unjust bonds in full, and we had done it. That was our success in self-government, and after twenty-five years' trial we ended with the Denshawai incident—a cruel method of barbarism which would be a lasting disgrace to Lord Cromer and to this country. And we said that that was the only way to govern the people of Egypt. He would like to know whether the Government intended to make a *bonâ fide* effort to set up self-government in Egypt. We had no moral right to interfere there at all, we were there merely because we were the stronger, and the people of Egypt had a right to say what the people of this country had said before, they had a right at all events to govern themselves in their own way. So far as he could see there had been no attempt whatever to teach the Egyptians to govern themselves. The Government had always been what was known as "Downing Street government." Now "Downing Street government" for hundreds of years had always been a failure, and in every one of our Colonies where it had been done away with, even in Canada, it was always spoken of with the greatest contempt. The Britisher could govern himself wherever he might be placed, but British Governments could not, and they had been a failure at all times unless they represented the people. He did not wish to detain the House at greater length, but he trusted that the Liberal Government would as soon as possible in all countries with which they had anything to do, give the people an opportunity to govern themselves. He therefore hoped his right hon. friend would take such steps as would give to the Egyptian people that local self-government to which so far as their particular local affairs were concerned they were entitled to have.

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON said in view of the assurance given by the right hon. Gentleman he desired to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question again proposed.

Motion made, and Question, "That the debate be now adjourned,"—(*Sir E. Carson,*)—put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

Whereupon, Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to Standing Order No. 3.

Adjourned at twenty minutes before Five o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 3rd February, 1908.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :

Aire and Calder Navigation.

Ammanford Urban District Council Water.

Argentine North Eastern Railway.

Audenshaw and Saddleworth Urban District Councils.

Barry Railway.

Belfast Corporation.

Blackburn Corporation.

Blaydon and Ryton Water (Transfer).

Bognor Gas Light and Coke Company.

Bristol Corporation.

Bristol Tramways.

Briton Ferry Urban District Council.

Bromley and Grays Gas.

Burnley Corporation.

Bury and District Joint Water Board.

Camberwell and other Metropolitan Borough Councils (Superannuation).

Cardiff Railway.

Cheshire Lines Committee.

City of Glasgow. (Substituted Bill.)

Commercial Union Assurance Company.

Conway and Colwyn Bay Joint Water Board.

Criccieth Water and Improvement.

Crystal Palace Company.

Dartford Gas.

Derby Gas.

Doncaster Corporation.

Draycott Gas.

Dublin and Central Ireland Electric Power.

Dublin Corporation.

Dublin Corporation (Various Powers).

Dublin and South Eastern Railway.

Dundalk Urban District Council.

Finchley Urban District Council.

Fine Art and General Insurance Company.

Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours.

Garw and Ogmore Gas.

Glyncorrwg Urban District Council.

Gosport Gas.

Great Eastern Railway (General Powers).

Great Eastern Railway (Steamboats).

Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway.

Great Western Railway.

Great Western Railway (Superannuation).

Greystones Gas.

Harwich Docks.

Hastings Harbour.

Herne Bay Pier Company.

Highgate Hill Tramways.

Holderness Water.

Huddersfield Waterworks.

Hull and Barnsley Railway.

Humber Commercial Railway and Dock.

Keighley Corporation.

King's College, London (Transfer).

Kingston-upon-Hull Corporation.

Knott End Railway.

Law Guarantee Trust and Accident and United Legal Indemnity Insurance Societies.

Leeds Corporation.

Leicester Corporation.

Lincoln Corporation.

Liverpool Corporation (General Powers).

Liverpool Corporation (Streets and Buildings).

Llanelly Gas.

Llanelly and Burry Port Water Board.

London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway.

London County Council (General Powers).

London and District Electricity Supply.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

London Electric Supply.

London Motor Roadways Approach.

London Port and Docks.

London (Westminster and Kensington) Electric Supply Companies.

Louth and East Coast Railway (Transfer).

Macclesfield and District Tramways (Abandonment).

Madras Railway Company (Purchase).

Magee Presbyterian College, Londonderry.

Manchester Corporation.

Margate Corporation.

Merthyr Tydfil Corporation.

Metropolitan District Railway.

Monmouthshire County Council.

Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway.

North Eastern Railway.

North East London Railway.

Northern Assurance Company.

Norwich Union Fire Insurance Company.

Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways.

Padiham Urban District Council.

Pontypridd Water.

Ravensthorpe Urban District Council.

Rhymney and Aber Valleys Gas and Water.

Rhymney Railway.

Rochdale Corporation.

Rochester Bridge.

St. Marylebone Borough Council (Superannuation).

Seaham Harbour Dock.

Skegness Urban District Council.

Sligo and Arigna Railway.

Slough Urban District Water.

South Wales Electrical Power Distribution.

South West Suburban Water.

Southwell District Gas.

Stockport Corporation.

Swansea Valley Gas.

Swinton and Mexbrough Gas.

Taff Vale Railway.

Thames Conservancy.

Upton Town Hall.

Wath-upon-Dearne Urban District Council Gas.

West Bridgford Urban District Water.

West Riding County Council.

Widnes Corporation.

Wolverhampton Corporation.

Also the Certificates that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have not been complied with :

Bristol Docks.

Dover Graving Docks.

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements).

Lower Thames (Grays) Dock.

Malvern Hills.

Stratford-upon-Avon, Towcester, and Midland Junction, Evesham, Redditch, and Stratford-upon-Avon Junction, and East and West Junction Railways (Amalgamation).

Thames River Steamboat Service Act, 1904 (Amendment).

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRANSVAAL.

Further correspondence relating to legislation affecting Asiatics in the Transvaal in continuation of [Cd. 3887.], January 1908) :

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

List of evening schools in England and Wales, for the school year ended 31st July 1906.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND).

Return of evictions in Ireland, for the quarter ended 31st December 1907.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION.

Return of advances made under the Irish Land Act, 1903 during the month of February 1907.

COMMERCIAL, No. 1 (1908).

Correspondence respecting the adhesion of Russia to the Brussels Sugar Convention of 5th March 1902.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

COUNTY COURTS (ENGLAND) (FEES).

Treasury Order, date 17th January 1908, regulating fees in county courts.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD, (IRELAND).

The Poor Law Relief (Ireland) (House of Commons Return) Order, 1907.

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS, 1853 TO 1891 (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).

Licence granted by His Majesty to John Lee, under the provisions of the Penal Servitude Acts 1853 to 1891, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A. of the Penal Servitude Act 1864.

BANK OF ENGLAND.

Account of the amount of all Exchequer Bills and other Government securities which have been purchased by the Governor and Company of the Bank of England, or on which any sum or sums have been lent and advanced for the Public Service by the Governor and Company of the said Bank in the year ended 5th January 1908; showing what amount of such bills before the making up of this account has been paid off and discharged, and the amount of such Exchequer Bills or other Government securities which was in the hands of the Governor and Company of the said Bank on the 5th day of January 1908 aforesaid.

OTTAWA MINT.

Treasury minute, dated 25th January 1908, directing that the accounts of the expenditure out of the Ottawa Mint annuity be examined and audited by the Comptroller and Auditor-General.

IMPERIAL OTTOMAN GUARANTEED LOAN OF 1855.

Account, for the year ended 31st December 1907, showing the sums issued and applied for interest, as guaranteed by Her late Majesty, and for management of the Imperial Ottoman Guaranteed Loan of 1855; and also of the repayments in respect of advances under the said Act:

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

THE ASSASSINATIONS IN LISBON.

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (The Marquess of RIPON): My Lords, I beg to give notice that I shall to-morrow, at the opening of business, move "That an humble address be presented to His Majesty to convey to His Majesty the expression of the indignation and deep concern with which this House has learned of the assassination of His Majesty's ancient ally and friend His Majesty the King of Portugal and the Algarves and of His Royal Highness the Duke of Braganza, and to pray His Majesty that he will be graciously pleased to express to His Majesty, the present King, on behalf of this House, their abhorrence of the crime and their sympathy with the Royal Family of Portugal, and with the people of that country."

FATAL ACCIDENTS (DAMAGES) BILL. [H.L.]

A Bill to amend the law with respect to the assessment of damages under the Fatal Accidents Acts, was presented by the Lord Courtney of Penwith; read 1ª; to be printed, and to be read 2ª on Tuesday, the 11th instant. (No. 3.)

ADDRESS IN REPLY TO HIS MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

Order of the day for resuming the debate on the Motion for an humble Address to His Majesty, read.

THE EARL OF LEITRIM: My Lords, in re-opening the debate on the disturbance of Ireland, I wish to make a few remarks on certain points in the speeches of noble Lords opposite. The speeches from the Ministerial side of the House have not been many, only three noble Lords opposite having taken part in the debate. The noble Earl, Lord Beauchamp, complained that noble Lords on this side took too pessimistic a view of the situation in Ireland. While not in the least admitting that, I wish to reaffirm our complaint that members of His Majesty's Government have on several occasions tried to give the impression that things in Ireland were not in so serious a state, and that the disturbances were confined to a very small area.

The noble Earl went on to say that cattle-driving had already been condemned by members of His Majesty's Government in this House. Well, months have passed since then, and I regret that the effect of their words on the government of

Ireland has been *nil*. It is perfectly true that in speeches on this subject last session His Majesty's Government gave the impression that they would do all in their power to preserve law and order. But, unfortunately, that has not been followed up by action, and disorders have occurred which could undoubtedly have been avoided. Later on in his speech Earl Beauchamp took exception to the remark of the noble Marquess the Leader of the Opposition that the grazing industry was in danger of being ruined, and against this the noble Earl brought police evidence to prove that there was no considerable increase in the number of grass farms unlet. In view of the system under which the farms are let in many of the districts in which cattle-driving is prevalent, it is rather early to judge of the effect which this cattle-driving will have on the letting of grazing; but the fact that the grazing industry is in danger is undoubted, as I shall try to prove.

I will give the case of an estate situated in county Westmeath. As long ago as December, 1906, the United Irish League prevented the letting of some 634 acres of grass lands, the result being that these lands were left derelict during the whole of 1907. The rents received in past years were as follows: In 1905, £498; in 1906, £469; and in 1907, £54. On the same estate there are also a few agricultural tenants, and the relations between landlord and tenant were, I am given to understand, quite excellent. In July of last year the landlord approached his tenants with a view to arranging terms of purchase, as at that time there seemed a good prospect of boycotting being removed. Mr. Ginnell, M.P., then interested himself in the matter. He came down to the town and made violent speeches, which resulted in all chances of purchase being at an end and the boycotting was continued. So here, my Lords, you have a case in which the grazing was interfered with. Not only that, but in consequence of agitation the chance of purchase by the tenants of their holdings has been postponed. Lord Castletown said something on Thursday night on this point. Speaking in support of His Majesty's Government, the noble Lord said—

> "He had seen farmers begging the graziers to buy their cattle, but the latter stoutly refused, pointing out that it was no use buying cattle which would be driven off."

The Earl of Leitrim.

This is the whole point, and it was made quite clear in the debates on this subject last year. It is the farmers who suffer, and, what is more, the farmers in the peaceful districts.

What are the farmers to do with the cattle they cannot sell to the graziers? Their farms are admittedly too small to fatten the cattle themselves, so they are compelled to sell them to dealers for shipment to England, losing heavily in the transaction. These cattle are not fit for the market and cannot possibly stand a heavy freight if they are to leave any profit to the farmer. Then there was no mention in the speeches of noble Lords opposite of the other agrarian crimes, such as boycotting and intimidation, which have been enumerated by noble Lords on this side. These are undoubtedly the result of the Government's refusal to put a stop to cattle-driving. Is it not a confession of weakness to say, as it is said, that these disturbances are owing to a grievance dating back many years? The reason is to be found in the fact that irresponsible agitators, with no stake in the country, are allowed to preach disorder without let or hindrance. The whole question is whether the Government have done right in their refusal to put into force the Prevention of Crimes Act. I can fairly say that the provisions of that Act have no terror for the law-abiding citizens, and in refusing to put it in force the Government leave many of those people to the mercy of terrorism and boycotting, instituted by the United Irish League. And these things are to be endured because certain members of the Cabinet have spoken against the Prevention of Crimes Act.

Then, my Lords, how do these things affect other portions of Ireland? The part I come from—County Donegal—is situated in the peaceful area, but we have to say so in black and white. For if anyone takes up a local paper and looks for the farmer's advertisements he will undoubtedly find that there is a statement that these farms are situated in a peaceful part of the country. We do not complain of that; but I think it would rather surprise noble Lords in England if, in letting their farms, they had to make it known that they were situated in a peaceful part of the country. Moreover, the farmers in the peaceful districts take a large part in providing the cattle which go to the grazing districts, and would necessarily suffer if this market were done away with. Then, again, as always happens in disturbances of this kind, all new works of an industrial character are put a stop to, and of these Ireland is greatly in need.

It is true that little capital is being invested in England; how much more true is this in the case of Ireland. There is capital in Ireland at the present time to be reinvested. The Government are paying Irish landlords for the estates that have been purchased from them. The payments are being made slowly, it is true, but still the landlords are being paid; and it is a question of considerable importance what portion of that money is going to be reinvested in Ireland. I fear that if these disturbances continue that portion will be very small. During the last ten years English railways have done much, by improving connections with Irish railways, and inducing people to go to Ireland from England, in opening up the country. That work is in danger of getting a serious set-back. Already the question has been asked, "Is it safe to go to Ireland?" This, of course, may be absurd, but it does not do Ireland any good if the British people take it into their heads that it is not safe to go to Ireland. We have heard that it is the wish of His Majesty's Government to carry out the policy of Mr. Wyndham, and give effect to the provisions of the Land Act of 1903; but it would seem that they have forgotten the whole foundation of that policy—namely, the preservation of law and order.

LORD DENMAN: My Lords, I rise to reply, not so much to the general criticisms which have been offered against the Government in the conduct of Irish administration, as to say a word or two in my own defence, and I trust that the noble Earl who has just sat down will acquit me of any discourtesy towards him if I leave the task of replying to the arguments he has put forward to another noble Lord behind me who will presently address the House.

Before I say anything in my own defence, I should like to be permitted to touch on an incident that occurred before the debate on the Address began. I allude to the fact that a technical difficulty, as I understand it, in connection with the writ of Lord Curzon was successfully overcome, and that he has been enabled to take his seat as a Member of your Lordships' House. There were one or two rather unusual incidents, I believe, in connection with his election as a representative Irish Peer. I desire to refer to one incident connected with what happened. A leading article appeared in *The Times* at the end of last year advocating the candidature of Lord Curzon to noble Lords from Ireland. The writer pointed out the great ability and debating experience of Lord Curzon, and then observed that—

> "The Irish Peers would probably themselves be quite ready to admit that as a rule they are not conspicuous for debating power of a very high order."

The Times went on to say that they put their case well enough, but that to people who were familiar with the facts it was clear that they did not bring out the full strength of their position. I naturally hesitate to differ from such a weighty, and, I understand, non-Party organ as *The Times*, but at the same time I venture entirely to differ from the view it expressed on that occasion. In my opinion there are several noble Lords from Ireland who possess, if anything, more than average debating ability, and I think if anyone in this House is able to speak on that particular point it is myself.

Last session I had occasion to take part in an Irish debate. Next morning a considerable section of the Unionist Press, in commenting upon the speech I made, welcomed it as a vindication of law and order. It is rather interesting at this time to recall some of the comments which the Unionist Press made upon that speech. I have one such comment here. It is this—

> "The Government are at last awake to the facts. Perhaps it was too good to be true, but last night Lord Denman told his fellow Peers that law-breaking in the West of Ireland was causing grave anxiety to the Government and that order must be restored."

The newspaper from which I am quoting went on to say that this was taken as the first indication that the Radicals and Nationalists were no longer running in harness, and that instead of the announcement being made by a Cabinet Minister, one holding a "teeny-weeny" office was put up to make it so that the shock should be gentle. The critic continued—

> "However, the point was an admission by Lord Denman, speaking for the Government, that there are disturbances, that they are causing anxiety, and that the agitators, if they do not mind, will feel the weight of the law."

That was the comment of a writer in the Unionist Press, eager, no doubt, to find fault if he could with what I said, and that was the general attitude of the Unionist Press towards my speech.

But what happened then? The debate was continued the following day, and certain Irish Peers, whose debating skill I so much admire and envy, put an entirely different complexion upon the state of affairs. They did so with such success that ever since, I, a very peaceable subject of His Majesty who has never broken the law, with the exception of some regrettable and costly incidents connected with a motor car, have been held up as inciting people in Ireland to lawlessness and crime of every description, and I have had to listen to criticisms of all kinds levelled at me in respect of what I said in that great and historic speech. Of course, I can hardly be expected to welcome those criticisms, whether they were the stern rebukes of the noble Marquess Lord Lansdowne and his colleague Lord Londonderry, or the satire of Lord Donoughmore and other noble Lords from Ireland.

But on Thursday night last Lord Donoughmore applied himself to the task of what he called rubbing it in. And let me say that until the beginning of this session, I had never appreciated the true generosity of the noble Earl's character. In his manly endeavour to rub it in thoroughly and effectually the noble Earl went a little further, I think, than it is customary to go in debates in this House, for under the veil of some rather spiteful pleasantries at my expense he thought fit to make certain charges against myself. One was the suggestion that I was running away. He said he hoped I was not running away. The fact that I am speaking at this Table to-night will, I think, be an answer to that.

Another thing he went on to say was that I was leaving the Irish Office, as he rather clumsily put it, for the Irish Office's good. I have never concealed my opinion that it is under very great difficulty that I am connected with the representation of the Irish Office in this House. I do not pretend—I have never pretended—to be familiar with the many difficult Irish problems that present themselves, and if the noble Marquess the Leader of the House chooses to appoint some noble Lord who is more familiar with Irish questions than myself, to the duty of representing that Office in your Lordships' House, I frankly confess that that is a blow which I shall survive. But at the same time I believe—and I think, perhaps, the noble Marquess himself will bear me out—he prefers that I should remain——

The Marquess of RIPON: Hear, hear.

Lord DENMAN: And so long as he does prefer that I should remain I shall consider it my duty to stay. I think, therefore—and I trust I may say this with all possible respect—that instead of quoting false reports in your Lordships' House the noble Earl would be better employed in minding his own business. Then there was some further pleasantry about a little boy being bullied and badgered by a bigger boy, or a stouter boy, or something of that kind. I am not quite sure what the exact phrase was, but he spoke of a poor little timid nervous boy being badgered by a big, stout, overbearing, blustering, bullying sort of boy. I am sure the noble Earl will forgive me if I misquote him, because I noticed that *The Times* report suppressed what I am sure your Lordships will consider the more injudicious portions of the noble Earl's speech. We are all good humoured this afternoon, and pleased, at the beginning of the session, to meet each other again. But supposing that in the wear and tear of debates later on in the session we deliberately endeavour to provoke each other by personal attacks of this kind, I ask noble Lords on the Front Opposition Bench how far it is going to contribute to the dignity and order of your Lordships' House.

I turn from this rather distasteful topic to a more important point. Ever since I made the speech which noble Lords have so much criticised, Mr. Balfour, in those utterances which he has delivered from the platform, has seldom failed to allude to it—or perhaps I should say in those speeches in which he was not busy endeavouring to find a formula which should unite all sections of his Party on another and more important question. I should like to quote the version which Mr. Balfour gave of what I said when he addressed a meeting during the recess at Devonport. I am quoting from *The Times* report of his speech. He said—

> "The representative of the Irish Office in the House of Lords said: 'We,'—he did not speak for himself, but for the Government, of whom he was the mouthpiece—'we consider cattle-driving to be comparatively harmless.'"

Now, my Lords, I would like to turn from that and remind your Lordships exactly what it was I did say. I said—

> "Though not in itself a crime of a serious nature, nevertheless the disturbances in those districts where it took place were such as to give grave anxiety to the Government of Ireland."

And again I said—

> "At the same time we do deplore—we very deeply deplore—this agitation, not only for the reasons which noble Lords have given us, but also because in our opinion it must be entirely fruitless."

Later on, in a debate that was initiated by my noble friend Lord Arran, I again had occasion to refer to what I said; and in reference to the particular phrase I used—if you like I am quite ready to admit it was an incautious phrase, but I deny it was anything worse than that—in reference to that phrase I said—

> "If I had thought the words I used were liable to the misinterpretation which was placed upon them, I would have endeavoured to express myself in different terms,"

and I note that later on in the course of that debate the noble and learned Lord opposite, Lord Ashbourne, who I believe is about to follow me, expressed himself as satisfied with what I then said.

I now return to the comment of Mr. Balfour, who represented me as saying that we considered cattle-driving to be comparatively harmless. I deny that I ever used any phrase that could be so interpreted. Naturally I am flattered at the notice which the ex-Premier takes of speeches that I have delivered in this House. I hope he will peruse with equal care all the speeches in this House of members of His Majesty's Household who are also connected with Government Departments. I am quite sure he will find them very excellent reading. But I ask any impartial and fair-minded man outside this House whether it is an entirely fair proceeding on the part of the ex-Premier to take a phrase out of the speech of a Lord-in-Waiting to the King, to take that phrase altogether without the context, and then to misquote it and use it, not to attack that particular Lord-in-Waiting, because, of course, the ex-Premier does not care two straws about that, but in order to attack the Chief Secretary for Ireland.

To return for one moment to Lord Donoughmore. I gathered from the noble Earl's speech that he was anxious that I should once more reiterate my opinion on cattle-driving. If the noble Earl still wants my opinion he must go to the library of your Lordships' House, turn to the volume of *Hansard* which contains the report of the debates in last June—the 24th June more particularly, perhaps—and he will find the opinion which I then held, and which I still hold, on this criminal folly which is known as cattle-driving. I will go further than that. If there is really a genuine desire on the part of noble Lords opposite, or in any other quarter of the House, that they should have those speeches of mine in a convenient form, I will follow the example of my noble friend Lord Wemyss and have them printed as a pamphlet, and at my own expense will circulate them to all the Members of your Lordships' House. I think it will be difficult for anybody to make a fairer or a handsomer offer than that. Lord Lansdowne spoke the other night of the lull that has taken place in this cattle-driving agitation. Now that the worst of the winter months are through and this lull has come without recourse to the Crimes Act and those methods of coercion of which noble Lords opposite are so fond, surely it is not too much to hope that a better future is in store even in those parts of Ireland which cause anxiety, and, I am perfectly ready to admit, very grave anxiety, to the Government of Ireland.

THE EARL OF DUDLEY: My Lords, so much has already been said in the course of this debate that I can hardly hope to advance any argument that has not already been touched upon. But the subject of this discussion is undoubtedly an important one, involving considerations, to my mind at any rate, of a very far-reaching kind, and therefore as one who has been but recently connected with the Government of Ireland I may, perhaps, be allowed to trespass for a very few moments upon your Lordships' time.

In approaching this subject, may I be allowed to say that I am anxious to dissociate myself as far as possible from any Party point of view? I want to look at this question from its broad aspect, and to consider it, if I can, not as it affects this Party or that, but as it affects generally the government and people of Ireland. Looking back upon the history of Ireland, upon the existing conditions of life there, it is, perhaps, inevitable that our discussions with regard to that country should be carried on from different standpoints. Yet, my Lords, is it not a fact that both English and Irish interests suffer most profoundly from this constant conflict of opinion? Everyone who has had experience of public affairs knows very well the difficulty of conducting government in Ireland. Most of your Lordships are aware how complex are many of the questions which arise there, and how deeply they are affected by the character and traditions of the race which they concern.

My Lords, are we making those difficulties less for either side by seizing every Party advantage, by proclaiming from the housetops the diversity of our views? Is it possible, in such circumstances, to expect that the Irish people will settle down? Is it possible to persuade them to be quiet and law-abiding citizens when they are constantly reminded of the fact that the people who are primarily responsible for making the laws under which they live, themselves radically differ on the very principles on which those laws should be based? It would not be fitting for me to labour this point. Your Lordships will, I hope, acquit me of any desire to dogmatise upon such a subject. I only mention it because at the very outset of my remarks I would make an appeal to noble Lords who sit upon this side of the House to remember that many of those Irish questions which at first sight appear very simple involve issues of a most important character—issues which affect the future to a very great extent; and, my Lords, in my humble opinion, this is one of these cases. No one, I conceive, can seriously dispute the illegality of the proceedings which have been going on in several districts in Ireland during the last year or eighteen months. No impartial man, I suppose, would defend the action of the cattle-drivers or of those who have encouraged them. No one will deny that this agitation must come to an end. But, my Lords, that is the simple side of this question. Its difficulties are only realised when we come to consider by what methods we are going to deal with it. Now let me say a few words as to the causes which, in my opinion, have led to this agitation. During the discussion on Thursday night we had the advantage of listening to the speeches of several noble Lords who live in Ireland, and two of them—my noble friend Lord Donoughmore and the noble Lord who sits upon the opposite side, Lord Castletown—explained at considerable length the reasons which, in their view, had led to this agitation. I listened to these explanations with great attention, but I am bound to say that neither of them seemed to me fully to represent the situation.

The noble Lord opposite, Lord Castletown, told us that cattle-driving arose from the old story of doing the right thing too late, and that responsibility for it lay at the door of the late Government for not promptly carrying out the Land Act of 1903 as Mr. Wyndham had intended. Well, my Lords, in my judgment that is a very limited view. I do not for a moment dispute that the settling of what is known as the Connaught problem has been postponed by far too long. Nobody regrets that fact more than I do. Nobody attempted more strenuously than I did while I was in Ireland to draw attention to the pressing needs of poverty and congestion in the West. Nor do I deny that during the last two years of the Conservative Government, and also during the two years that have elapsed since noble Lords opposite took office, the Land Act of 1903 has worked far more rapidly in Ulster, in Leinster, and in the greater part of Munster than in those Western districts where congestion has assumed serious dimensions.

But Lord Castletown's argument seemed to imply that cattle-driving was intimately connected with congestion, and that those who had been guilty of it desired to obtain possession of the ranches for the enlargement of small holdings. Personally, I do not believe such is the case. Cattle-driving has, as a rule, been carried on by men whose ambitions and desires sharply conflict with those of the congested population. For that reason. therefore, it fills me with astonishment that the Government should consider that they will check this agitation by the mere declaration in the gracious Speech that they propose to acquire land compulsorily for the relief of congestion in the West.

Then there is the explanation of Lord Donoughmore. In my opinion, my noble friend, with that instinct so common to Irishmen, succeeded fully in saddling the right horse. He told us that these cattle-drivers were, as a rule, landless men, the sons of tenants or tenant purchasers who sought to obtain possession of the land in order that they might follow the profession of their fathers. That I believe to be a perfectly accurate description of one of the reasons of this agitation. But, in my opinion, it is not the only reason, nor is it, indeed, the most important reason, why this movement became as marked as it did. For there is in this agitation, as in many agitations, unfortunately, in Ireland, a factor which lies deeper than that to which my noble friend referred—a factor which has been produced, not by great land hunger amongst one class of the population, not by mere feeling of envy on the part of those who have not towards those who have, but by the old story of the national demands of the people.

Now, my Lords, what is the explanation of the fact that only last summer the Government minimised the importance of an agitation which a month ago had assumed such serious proportions? I believe it to be this, that in the early stages of this agitation there was no reason to suppose that it was anything more than another expression of that almost chronic condition of unrest which, unhappily, exists in many districts in Ireland; but after the collapse of the Council Bill a new element altogether was introduced into the situation. Although the Council Bill was rejected by an Irish Convention, yet, strange as it may seem, a number of people in that country considered it necessary to make it hot for the Government. A virile agitation was widely recommended and steps were taken to discover the most suitable starting point for such a campaign. As has often happened before in Ireland, agrarian agitation seemed to offer the most profitable field for their enterprises. And so it was that this cattle-driving movement, which up to that time had assumed but very small proportions, suddenly developed under the influence and encouragement of men whose object seems to have been to pick a quarrel with the Government.

Remember, my Lords, that the attitude of Irish politicians is always in one of two directions. Either they are controlling their supporters with a view to promised legislation, or they are stirring up the country on the old principle of making British government in Ireland impossible. And so it was in this case. This much-talked of Council Bill, by which it was expected a large instalment of self government would be given to Ireland, had, for reasons into which I need not enter, been found unacceptable, and therefore high hopes were shattered. Keen resentment—I think mistaken resentment—was felt towards the Government, and so these politicians under the influence of those feelings, set to work upon their virile agitation in an attempt to teach a lesson, not only to noble Lords who sit opposite, but still more to the noble Earl who sits upon the Cross Benches. That, I take it, represents the situation as it existed in Ireland a month or two ago.

The important question in connection with it is whether the Government should have departed from their policy of depending upon the ordinary law and should have fallen back upon an application of the powers contained in the Crimes Act of 1887. Now I am bound to say that I am not satisfied that there is such necessity existing. I am fully aware that in saying this I am dissociating myself from the view that is held, and that has been expressed, on this side of the House, and I will ask your Lordships to believe that it is with infinite regret that I recognise that I do not see eye to eye on that important question with those who in other ways I regard as my political friends. But, my Lords, ever since I went to Ireland I have striven to the best of my humble ability to do what seemed to me best in the true interests of that country and of my own, and I cannot, therefore, refrain now from dissociating myself from the advocacy of a policy which, though perhaps temporararily efficacious, to my mind cuts at the root of all true union between England and Ireland, and which embitters public opinion in that country to such an extent as to render successful government difficult, if not impossible. For, my Lords, whatever may be the ultimate decision of the nation with regard to the demand which the Irish people make, and I believe will continue to make, for an amendment of the present system of government, we cannot forget that this system at present is a Unionist system.

What does Unionism mean to Ireland? It implies, at any rate to my mind, three great conditions. First, that the united Parliament should seek promptly and thoroughly to remedy any grievances which in Ireland may truly be shown to exist, and with regard to which full allowance should be made for the special characteristics, traditions, and religion of the people. Secondly, there should be no great divergence in the laws and institutions under which the people of the united countries live. Thirdly, there should be the belief that by constant and consistent good government on these lines you will be successful in securing the adherence and support of the majority of the people affected. Judged by these tests, I do not hesitate to say that, in my opinion, at any rate, the application of the exceptional powers of exceptional legislation such as the Crimes Act, is inconsistent with the whole spirit of Unionism, and gives rise to considerations not always fully realised by those who advocate them.

Take, for instance, the first condition. Is there any noble Lord who believes that remedial legislation is possible when coercion exists in Ireland? Is there any noble Lord opposite who thinks that the University Bill or the new Land Bill, both of which are foreshadowed in the gracious Speech, would have much chance of passing into law if last autumn you had imprisoned half the leading politicians of Ireland under the provisions of the Crimes Act? I have had some experience of coercion myself. In the autumn of 1902 a good many counties were proclaimed in Ireland, the county of Dublin, amongst others, for, I believe, the first time in its history. Those proclamations were substantially modified in February, 1903, and I am convinced that if they had not been so modified the Land Act of that year would have been very much imperilled.

We should all agree, of course, that a condition of affairs might arise in the lifetime of any Government, and, indeed, of any country, where the restoration of order could only be effected by the drastic application of exceptional legislation; and in such cases, of course, even the prospect of remedial legislation must be subordinated to the restoration of public peace. But I must confess that I am not satisfied that the situation is, or has been recently, in Ireland of such a character, and in view of the remedial legislation which the Government have foreshadowed I am of opinion that the application of the Crimes Act would probably have done more harm than good. For there is no doubt that coercion under any Government means war to the knife in Ireland; and these Irish wars, as most other wars, generally end in terms of peace. If, therefore, you are able to make terms of peace without a declaration of war surely that is the most sensible policy.

That brings me to the consideration of another reason why, in my opinion, every Government should be very slow in resorting to the Crimes Act in Ireland. I have said that it means war to the knife, and a war of that kind, of course, has the inevitable effect of widening the breach between the Administration and the leaders of Nationalist public opinion in Ireland. There are some people, I know, who regard that as a matter of no concern. Personally, however, I regard it as one of the most unfortunate facts connected with the Government of Ireland. I am perfectly aware that some people laugh, and that other people rave, when the word "conciliation" is used in connection with the Government of Ireland. We are told—and not always by Englishmen—that it is most immoral and most disloyal for Unionists to have any connection or communication with Nationalists in Ireland. But, my Lords, what is Unionism I should like to know, except a policy of conciliation? Does any Unionist seriously believe that the Unionist system of government is in accordance with the convictions of the majority of the Irish people? And, if not, how does he justify its legitimate continuance unless he believes that by conciliating his opponents he will win them over and convert them to his own point of view?

For several years I have been frequently taunted with having used the expression that Ireland should be governed according to Irish ideas. Nobody has been more astonished than I have at the extreme importance that has been attached to that phrase. In connection with the government of any other country but Ireland it would be accepted, I imagine, as one of the most ordinary platitudes. Why, then, I should like to know, is Ireland alone, even under a Unionist system, to be debarred from the application of such a very elementary principle? It is said that government according to Irish ideas involves Home Rule. I deny that it necessarily involves anything of the sort. What I do think it implies is a conciliatory, and not a hostile, attitude by the Government towards those who lead public opinion in Ireland, and an attempt to enlist their support in favour of the policy which the Government may have in view. And, my Lords, here is the great fundamental difficulty which confronts every Government in Ireland. I take it that no Government can hope to be permanently successful in any country unless it is generally supported by public opinion. In Ireland, however, unfortunately, as we all know, that support is too often withdrawn. How, then, are we to build up that opinion, how are we going to win over that support? Under a Unionist system I believe it can only be done by infinite patience, by infinite tact, and by a constant endeavour to avoid taking any action which saps the growth of friendly public opinion.

I may be told that such a policy is a hopelessly weak policy. I would reply that in my opinion it is the only chance that Unionism has got unless you choose to take your stand upon permanent government by force. And it is here that there is the difference between myself and some—I hope not all—noble Lords who sit on this side of the House. They are determined, *coûte que coûte*, to maintain the Union; and therefore to put down local agitation they do not hesitate to employ exceptional powers such as coercion, even if such action estranges the people from the Administration. I say frankly I am not a Unionist of that type. If I can maintain the Union by conciliatory and sympathetic methods, if I can succeed in bringing home to the people its advantages, if I am able gradually to develop a respect for the law and establish a feeling of general content, then well and good. But if that attempt fails—as some Unionists tell us it is sure to fail—or if that policy is abandoned whenever local disturbances arise, and conciliation alternates with coercion, then I say frankly that I would far rather consider the possibility of an amendment in the system of government than fall back upon that permanent attitude of force which some extreme Unionists advocate.

My reason for that can be stated. I believe thoroughly and honestly in the qualities of the Irish race. I believe them to be a brave, a quick-witted, and at heart a loyal people. I believe that the expressions of disloyalty which we unfortunately read of from time to time are, as a rule, manufactured articles, and I believe that real disloyalty only exists to a very small extent. Apparent disloyalty is undoubtedly part of the game in the struggle for national self-government; but, my Lords, there is undoubtedly grave discontent and a deep-seated dislike of British government. May I not, therefore, make an appeal to noble Lords who sit upon this side of the House to refrain from attacking, from mere Party considerations, a policy which, as I understand it, seeks to allay that dislike by conciliatory methods, and which strives to avoid taking any action which will, if persisted in, inevitably turn discontent into real disloyalty, and which would make it for ever impossible for England to take advantage of and to utilise those great and useful qualities with which, as I think, the Irish people are so richly endowed.

LORD ASHBOURNE: My Lords, I have listened to the speech of the noble Earl who has just sat down with every attention. I am not aware that at any time while he held the responsible and distinguished office of Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland he gave expression to any of those sentiments, and I venture to think the observations of the noble Earl will have been heard with very considerable surprise by many of those who sit on this side of the House. The noble Earl is quite entitled to hold what views he pleases, but I am certainly not prepared to accept a great many things he has said to-night. He stated at the close of his speech, as if he were the only person in the House who could express a candid opinion free from all tincture of Party sentiment, that he appealed to his friends to consider this question apart from all political considerations. What right has the noble Earl to say that?

The noble Marquess who introduced this discussion did so fairly, temperately and moderately, founding himself upon official statistics and statements of Ministers. He stated nothing but plain facts that could not be controverted. He pointed to the state of the country and asked what was to be done in this painful and critical state of affairs. What answer is there to that? The noble Earl has made a speech about the Union and about governing Ireland in accordance with Irish ideas, and has appealed to those who take part in the discussion not to shut their ears to all questions of conciliation. But who has done so? Who has indicated in any part of the House a desire not to listen to any measures that may be suggested for the material improvement of Ireland? The noble Earl has not grappled with a single one of the facts which were spread out before him so abundantly by the noble Marquess, Lord Londonderry, and which were corroborated and supported by eye-witnesses from Ireland.

What are those facts? Surely we have not been living in a balloon for the last six months! When Mr. Birrell came into office Mr. Bryce said he left the country in a reassuring position. Mr. Birrell said in April last—though it was a somewhat exaggerated description—that for 600 years the country had not been so quiet. Within six months time what is the condition of Ireland? Demoralisation, lawlessness, intimidation, outrages on property and on persons—that is the state of facts which has to be grappled with; and we do not want general observations about conciliation when there is no suggestion of any Bill of the kind before us. I accept all that has been said with regard to the Irish people. When they are not misled and misgoverned they are amenable to the law. I have seen it stated that there were 400 cases of cattle-driving within the six months which terminated in December. What an appalling state of things!

What is cattle-driving? One would think, from what has been said, that it meant merely opening the gates quietly in the day time and inviting the cattle to take a gentle ramble on the hills for their own comfort and gratification. But what in reality it means is the assembling in the dead of night of a mob armed with everything that can disturb and frighten people and cattle. The latter are driven out on to the road without the slighest care for what becomes of the cattle, or for the peace of mind and residential happiness of the owner. If in an English county cattle-drives were going on as they are in Ireland, would any Home Secretary be allowed to hold office for a week who tolerated that condition of things? Yet these things are done in Ireland with every circumstance of defiance and contempt of the law And that is what is called by my noble friend the disappointment of the people at the rejection—by themselves, be it noted—of the Irish Council Bill. I prefer, as a common-sense man, to believe that it is a desire to get possession of the grass lands. They want to prevent those lands being let, and thus to reduce their value and to get them for themselves. I believe the whole thing could have been checked by an energetic man in a month.

What do we find now? That the King's writs cannot be served, and that postmen who are known to have them are in danger. Is this a time for anything except seeing how law and order can be maintained? That is the topic with which we are now occupied. The effect of this cattle-driving campaign has been seriously to interfere with the cattle trade—an immense trade, a trade which your Lordships may be surprised to hear sends fourteen millions worth of Irish cattle to England every year. The noble Earl the President of the Board of Agriculture must know these figures well. There are also indirect consequences of the lawless state of things complained of, for claims are made against the ratepayers, many of them innocent persons, to pay for "malicious damage."

The suggestion of the noble Earl, Lord Dudley, is that the evil is confined to the West of Ireland, and to the congested counties. Let this be tested by the county of Meath, one of the quietest counties in Ireland, sparsely populated, with no congestion, with the greatest grazing lands in the United Kingdom, where you can almost see the cattle fattening before your eyes. That county is now one of the most disturbed parts of Ireland, because the Government would not act, but allowed it to be seen that the law was paralysed, and that they did not mean business. Take, again, the case that was presented to your Lordships the other evening by my noble friend Lord Langford, who made a most admirable and telling speech. He told us what he had seen with his own eyes, and every syllable he uttered had an effect on your Lordships. My noble friend was describing Meath. We also have the testimony of Judge Curran that—

> "One can scarcely credit that one is living in a civilised country."

Speaking on January 20th Judge Curran said—

> "From October to January boycotting and persecution have gone on unchecked. The laws under which we live are defied and trampled under foot, and mob law reigns triumphant in a certain portion of the country."

And on January 30th, at Trim, the county court judge said there had been fifty-three cases of cattle-driving in five months. I did not gather that the noble Earl who has just sat down suggested that any action should be taken. He would wait for the beneficent action of legislation on the working of the honest, upright Irish mind. I am all for the working of the honest, upright Irish mind, but I would like in the meantime, while it is developing, that there should be some effort made for maintaining law and order.

You have only to read the newspapers of the last few days to see that cattle-driving is still going on, and that many of those who have been advocating cattle-driving have said, "Put the hazels by for future use." They are put where they can be seasoned and strengthened ready for action whenever occasion arises. And what have the Government done all this time? What would the noble Earl who has just spoken desire them to do? Would he desire them to do anything, or is the suggestion this, that in face of the lawlessness which has been described, the Government should sit with folded hands waiting for the beneficent action of legislation on the working of the honest, upright Irish mind? Well, what have the Government done in face of this gross state of disorder? There has not been even an adequate strengthening of police. The speeches of Mr. Birrell are pitiable reading. He speaks of magistrates being outvoted by *ex officio* magistrates who come for the purpose, but what has he done to remedy that? Why did he not prosecute the leaders? Mr. Birrell is proud of not having had Mr. Ginnell arrested. Mr. Ginnell was, he said, itching to be arrested, and he was too clever a man to gratify so unworthy a feeling. And he did nothing. But the agitation was not confined to Mr. Ginnell. There were other leaders as prominent, if not more prominent. These men heaped every form of insult and denunciation upon the Government, who, they said, dared not interfere; and, as a question of policy, not one of these men was prosecuted. Can that be regarded as at all satisfactory? Out of 257 prosecutions there were only eight convictions. No wonder it was remarked that prosecution in these circumstances was a complete farce.

That no element should be wanting in the wretchedness of the position the Government have deliberately repealed the Peace Preservation Act, and enabled every man in Ireland for a few shillings to have a firearm in his hand. I ask the meaning of the term "Coercion Act" applied to a Statute, every clause of which has for its object only the prevention of crime, and the compelling of people to act as good citizens should act. During the whole time of the noble Earl's Lord-Lieutenancy some of the most important provisions of the Crimes Act were in full operation. Mr. Birrell's point is that except in cases of exceptional magnitude he would not have anything to say to the Crimes Act. But I will quote what his own Attorney-General, Mr. Cherry, said at Wicklow Assizes in December last—

> "Such a state of things would produce open anarchy in the country. It was, in fact, a worse condition of things than was to be met with among the savages in West Africa—nothing more nor less than mob law."

And on another occasion Mr. Cherry said—

> "If unchecked, anarchy would result."

These grave statements were made by the law officer who controls the public prosecutions of the country, and surely that state of affairs would justify the use of some of the provisions of the Crimes Act.

What earthly objection can there be to the application of the Crimes Act? Its clauses have been used, almost every one of them, in successive Bills passed by Mr. Gladstone's Government and other Governments. Some of its most useful provisions are part of the permanent law of Scotland. Clause 2 could be put into operation without any proclamation. It enables two resident magistrates, of whom one must be a man whose knowledge of the law is certified by the Lord-Lieutenant, to hear and decide summarily cases of riot and unlawful assembly, with an appeal to the County Court Judge. Riot and unlawful assembly are the very essence of cattle-driving. Lord Beauchamp, speaking the other night on behalf of the Irish Office, said that section 2 would be inefficient in the present circumstances. What on earth did that mean? If that clause had been applied the scandals of the failures of prosecutions of summary jurisdiction before the ordinary magistrates and the abortive trials at assizes would have been avoided. The clause was in operation during the Viceroyalty of Lord Dudley.

Then Lord Beauchamp said that no prosecutions would be any good without witnesses. Mr. Birrell's complaint was not that there were no witnesses, but that the resident magistrates who wanted to do right were outvoted by other magistrates who came in. He said that if it were left to the resident magistrates—as it would be, by the way, under section 2 of the Crimes Act—all things would be right. Why do you not leave them under section 2, and let all things be right? Not only was there plenty of evidence in the cases tried summarily, but at the winter assizes in Dublin, the Attorney-General, who prosecuted, said—

> "All the evidence is on one side, and there is none on the other."

You will not find any suggestion in those cases of want of evidence; yet there were no convictions. Section 2, in my opinion, would have provided a very efficient remedy against this scandalous failure of the law.

The Government have thought it right to go back to the year 1360, and have been acting under an Act passed in the reign of Edward III., under which one magistrate, sitting anywhere, not at petty sessions, and by himself, is empowered to bind a person by sureties to good behaviour without giving him the power of calling witnesses or of having an appeal. And the Government prefer that to allowing a section of the Crimes Act that needs no proclamation to be put in force, and under which two magistrates would hear the case in open court and it would be subject to appeal. Consistency is a very fine thing, but it can be bought too dearly. The noble Earl the Lord President of the Council, who will have the privilege of the last word, was asked by the noble Marquess, Lord Londonderry, for replies to several important questions regarding the use of the statute of Edward III., and I trust that in his speech he will give answers to those questions.

Now my noble friend Lord Dudley talks about governing Ireland according to Irish ideas. But who is to be taken as expressing Irish ideas? Does the phrase mean that the majority are to be listened to and the minority ignored? Does it mean that law-abiding people, with everything to lose, are to be set aside and that the disorderly, with everything to gain by disturbance, are to be regarded as the exponents of Irish opinion? Such a thing means chaos, or it means but the pretence and excuse for inaction.

The Attorney-General for Ireland, speaking at Belfast, also said that until the people were united in enforcing the law, prosecutions were no good. What on earth does the right hon. and learned Gentleman mean? Does he mean that the cattle-drivers must first be agreed that they wish to be prosecuted before the Government will put the law into operation? Does he mean that the natural desire of the man whose property is despoiled for protection is to be ignored? I listened to Lord Dudley with the closest attention, and I could not find that my noble friend uttered one syllable to indicate how the disturbances of the last few months are to be put down. The duty of the Government is to act in the living present. When they find people violating the law they ought not to wait and trust to the healing effects of time. They must not expect graziers whose cattle are taken to be patient and believe that their property will be restored to them, bettered and improved. I contend, my Lords, that the present position of affairs in Ireland would be discreditable to any Government.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord LOREBURN): My Lords, I am under some disadvantage in comparison with nearly all the noble Lords who have taken part in this debate, because they have, almost without exception, possessed local knowledge, and have been able to give local colour to what they have said, and thereby greatly to enhance the interest of their speeches. I have no such advantage, and all that I can claim to do is to place before your Lordships such information as is useful as to what the Government have done, and have not done, and why they have not done it. Since I have been in Parliament I have heard scores of debates upon this unhappy subject, and on nearly every occasion speakers of great authority and influence have told us that the state of Ireland was worse than it had ever been before. It seems to be almost a standing rule in debates of this kind. Lord Londonderry, I believe, said that Ireland's state now was worse than it had been for thirty or forty years.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY indicated assent.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: Some of us remember the time when the horrid murder of Lord Frederick Cavendish took place, years when the country was saturated with blood, and when there were murder clubs in many parts. It is certainly strange hearing to be told that things are worse now. Then it is said that the absence of crime of that violent character is conclusive proof of a more serious state of affairs, because its absence is entirely due to intimidation. The dilemma is somewhat difficult, for what is to satisfy Parliament regarding the true state of affairs? Comparing the statistics of the most serious agrarian crime in Ireland for the year 1881 with those of last year, I find that in 1881 there were thirty-six murders, last year seven; in 1881 assaults on police eighty-nine, last year three; in 1881 firing at the person 104, last year twenty-seven; in 1881 rioting and frays ninety-six, last year eleven; in 1881 threatening letters 2,862, last year 264; and in 1881 firing at dwellings 178, last year sixty. There was some increase between 1906 and 1907, but not a serious increase.

There are some satisfactory features in connection with the present state of affairs. First, there has been no agrarian murder whatever during the last two years. Secondly, there have been almost no assaults on the police, and I am told by the Government that the feeling between the police and the people has certainly improved. Again, there are very few—hardly any—cases of cattle-maiming, which is particularly gratifying, for nothing could be more disgusting and revolting than such mutilation. There have been few attempts to murder, and the Attorney-General tells me that where there have been prosecutions there have been convictions in all such cases in which he thinks that sufficient and proper evidence was shown. Although I am not in the least about to palliate what has taken place, I have omitted for the moment reference to boycotting and cattle-driving. These features which I have cited are, at all events, satisfactory as far as they go. I do not mention them to show that the country is wholly free from crime, but because it is really reasonable to realise these facts and figures when we are told that Ireland's state is worse than it has been for thirty or forty years.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: The evil which I insisted upon as being present now and not in the past was the demoralisation of all those responsible for the administration of the law.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: That, too, is a commonplace of these debates, and the statement has been the foundation of many bitter denunciations of Irish administration during the last twenty-five years. With regard to cattle-driving and boycotting, I agree that these things unchecked might produce complete anarchy; it is a question of degree and time.

But let us consider what is the source of cattle-driving. The noble Earl who lately was Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, in a speech of extraordinary interest, gave an account of cattle-driving which he was informed was the true view. I am not going to disinter the sad memories of past times; there is no one living, I suppose, who is in the least degree responsible for the occurrences that took place fifty or sixty years ago. The origin of these ranches being left in the state in which they are was the clearances which then took place. A great part of the population left the country, but some remained in the neighbourhood, their ambition being to have their holdings enlarged. Before 1903 there was, I will not call it a bargain, although I do not know that I might not so call it, but there was an understanding between the two sections of agrarian interests—the landlords' interests and the tenants' interests. Undoubtedly it was part of the understanding that facilities should be given of buying, at honest prices and by voluntary purchase, these lands for the express purpose of enlarging the tenants' holdings and of creating new holdings. I will not try to apportion the blame, if blame is due, but the position of the Government which has had to deal with this question since 1903 has changed. The great difficulty has been finding the money to carry out the Act of 1903 with sufficient rapidity, and the anticipations which were part of the bargain of 1903 has undoubtedly not been realised. This fact is, I think, the origin of the present trouble. The people feel that the bargain has not been carried out.

What steps have been taken by the Government for the purpose of preventing cattle-driving? It is absurd, of course, to suppose that I should enter upon any elaborate condemnation of a system which cannot be defended for a moment. The Government adopted the familiar method of police patrols and police guards. They commenced by indicting for unlawful assembly the persons who had been guilty of these cattle drives. Out of about twenty cases there was one conviction, but in most cases the juries either could not agree or acquitted; yet the cases were clear, and the evidence was such as in the opinion of the Attorney-General clearly showed guilt. Thereupon the Government proceeded under the Statute of Edward III. and brought people up by hundreds to be bound over or else go to prison. Some elected to go to prison, but a great number agreed to be bound over. There was no hesitation in taking steps under that Act. The result has been a great diminution in cattle drives. In November there were 108 cattle drives; in December there were eighty-one, and in January there were only thirty-four. It is a descending scale, and the Government believe that they are coping with this evil.

The suggestion was made in this debate—I do not know whether it was suggested humorously—that there was a lull in the cattle-driving because there had been a deal between the Government and some persons representing Irish national opinion, and that it had been agreed that cattle-driving should cease, and the Government should bring in a Bill to deal with University education. It seems to me that there is something Irish in the collocation of these two different sides to the consideration; but I may say there is absolutely no foundation of any sort or kind for such a suggestion. The reasons for the diminution are twofold—the proceedings under the statute of Edward III., and the growing unpopularity in Ireland itself of these cattle drives. Graziers will not buy cattle from the smaller farmers for fear such cattle may be driven. That is one circumstance which leads to the unpopularity of cattle-driving. The methods to which I have referred have been, as the figures show, fairly successful, and I think there is no doubt that by these methods the Government have coped, and will be able to cope, with the serious evil of cattle-driving.

There is no doubt that boycotting has revived, but not to a very serious extent, and only in a few counties. Every one knows how very difficult it is to deal with boycotting. I remember a famous speech by the late Lord Salisbury, in which he pointed out the extraordinary difficulties there are in dealing with this question. You can only put down boycotting with the sympathy and concurrence of the population as a whole. Experience has shown that it is no use bringing these cases before juries, and they can be tried only by juries according to law, unless under the Crimes Act. Therefore, we are brought face to face with the old familiar problem of whether Ireland is to be governed by exceptional laws. I have just listened, not with surprise, to the speech of a noble Earl who has himself been Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, and I should like to move for a return of the number of those who have gone over to Ireland as Conservative or Unionist Lords-Lieutenant or Chief Secretaries, and have come back with largely modified opinions after contact with the actual facts. The noble Earl now sees the difficulty of dealing with these matters by coercion laws.

It may be said that the Government might have dealt with boycotting by packing juries, for packing juries is one of the methods by which alone a Government, determined to depart from the ordinary law and determined to govern against the sympathies of the people, can govern Ireland. Packing juries is sure to bring about injustice. Some three or four years ago, when Mr. Wyndham was Chief Secretary, he stated there were three or four innocent people who had been convicted and severely punished and to whom he had to give monetary compensation. These men had been convicted by juries selected by the methods known as packing, while one man was so utterly persuaded he had no prospect of a fair trial that, although innocent, as was proved afterwards, he pleaded guilty in the hope of getting a light sentence. The present Government, therefore, will have nothing to do with packing juries.

There remains the other method of putting in force the Crimes Act. We might have set up a tribunal of resident magistrates, and proclaimed the United Irish League. But the Government have deliberately refused to use the Crimes Act, because it would create intense bitterness and exasperation against the administration of the law, it would, we are persuaded, produce more serious crime, and it would prevent the obtaining of evidence to secure the punishment of those who are guilty of boycotting. It would also frustrate the hope of beneficial legislation, and so deepen the distrust and dislike that there are of British institutions and of this country in so large a part of Ireland, which, whatever our future policy is to be, it ought to be our first object to remove.

Coercion, in some form, is an adjunct of every Government, but coercion to be effective must be such as will carry with it public opinion; otherwise it will be futile, or will produce evils worse than those which it seeks to remove. I do not question that things have been serious in Ireland. I think things are always serious in Ireland. They are always serious when you cannot trust a jury to convict when there is clear evidence. That is one of the most fatal and deadly symptoms in the body politic. It is always a serious thing when there is widespread disaffection towards the government of the country. This cannot be removed by any use, however lavish, of the Crimes Act, which would only inflame ill-feeling and increase the volume of crime. There are, in fact, two questions in Ireland, a permanent one and a temporary one. The permanent question is that referred to by the noble Earl who professed Unionism, who warned your Lordships in accents of great sincerity and most wisely against the use of methods of violence and of exceptional law in the interests of Unionism. I am not a Unionist. I believe there is no halfway house. I do not believe that you will be able to reconcile the wishes of the people of Ireland to the Government in its present form, where there is no responsibility upon those persons who are the representatives of Ireland. But the noble Earl's method is the only way of carrying out his ideals. My own view is different. Some day or other, I do not know when, Parliament will have to make up its mind to one of two things—either to treat Ireland as a Crown Colony or to give it Home Rule. I would give it Home Rule to-morrow.

VISCOUNT MIDLETON: My Lords, the speech to which we have just listened from the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack has been a pacific and sedative speech, but I cannot say that I think it is a reassuring speech. It is a speech which will give great disappointment to those who listened to the speech of the noble Marquess the Leader of the House on 7th June last. The observations of the Lord Chancellor fell very far short of what we were led to expect by the speech of the noble Marquess in terminating a debate which had certainly given your Lordships thorough warning of every one of the catastrophies which have since fallen on the Government of Ireland. The noble Marquess, Lord

Ripon, said on that occasion that he did not wish to use the Crimes Act. He added—

> "We want to stand by the ordinary law, unless the ordinary law fails."

Can anybody say, in the face of the statistics with which my noble friend Lord Londonderry introduced this debate, that the ordinary law has not failed? The noble Marquess the Leader of the House went on to say—

> "We do intend to put an end to the proceedings which have formed the subject of this discussion."

Will any noble Lord get up and say that the Government have put an end to these proceedings? It is almost trifling with the House to tell us that although there are means ready to hand they have not been used, and that the statute of Edward III. is not regarded as coercion. As I understand, the provisions of that statute are in some respects considerably more drastic than the Crimes Act. I shall be corrected if I am wrong, but I understand that the Crimes Act only enables a process to be carried out before two resident magistrates with legal knowledge, and that the statute of Edward III. enables the same process to be carried out before one magistrate, and that in the case of the Crimes Act there is an appeal which is denied in the case of the Act of Edward III.

I deeply regret that the noble Earl the late Viceroy of Ireland was not present in the House during the speech of my noble and learned friend Lord Ashbourne, who directed the noble Earl's attention to the Scottish law. The noble Earl said that the Crimes Act might be temporarily efficacious, but that it cut at the root of true union. If the only effect of exceptional law is to produce in Ireland the same order which a similar law has produced in Scotland, I do not see why it should cut at the root of unionism. Without labouring that point further, I feel we have a right to ask why are we less entitled to the benefit of a law which exists in Ireland than we are to the same law which exists in Scotland, and is it reasonable for us to accept the explanation which has been given by His Majesty's Government? I again invite noble Lords opposite, not one of whom has yet acknowledged it, to refer to the speech made by Lord Langford, who gave his own personal experience and stated that fourteen cattle-drives had taken place in his immediate neighbourhood and only two people had been made amenable. Half the countryside is in disorder, and all we are told is that these cattle-drives are in some parts of the country decreasing. I think we have a right to ask what further decrease we may look to after the speech of the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack.

I would also call your Lordship's attention to the speeches made by the Chief Secretary at the time, and after the speech of the noble Marquess Lord Ripon. In this House the subject has been treated with all seriousness, but I venture to say that the speeches of the Chief Secretary have not been marked by the seriousness which fits the situation. We have been treated to sneers and jibes at those who have endeavoured to support the cause of law and order in Ireland. I will not recall the expressions which have been used, but I do say there is no country in the world in which levity of speech by an official is so quickly followed by levity of action on the part of those he has to govern; and the epigrams of the Chief Secretary have been closely followed by increase of outrages in various parts of Ireland.

I am not going to set up for one moment the plea that the present state of Ireland in regard to actual crime can be compared with the state of Ireland in 1882, to which the noble and learned Lord on the Woolasck has made reference; but I say that the present conditions differ in every respect from the conditions which may have justified former agitation. The noble Marquess opposite will probably remember the agitation in the forties, and many Members of this House can recollect the depopulation of Ireland at the time of the famine, and the land agitation which continued up to a recent date. There is absolutely nothing in the state of Ireland to-day which can be compared with either of those terrible periods. Mr. Redmond, in a debate a few nights ago in another place, mentioned that 482,000 families had had to vacate their holdings between 1848 and 1882. There are no evictions in Ireland to-day. There is no unjust rent, for rents have been twice re-adjusted; there is no pressure on the part of landlords, and there is nothing whatever in the nature of a stimulus to agitation. There is no pretence that there is anything of that kind to-day in Ireland, and we are left to this fact, that the present agitation proceeds, not from men who are paying something which they have no right to pay, but from men who want something which belongs to somebody else, and from which other people are making a legitimate profit to the great advantage of the country. To that extent the agitation differs from all previous agitations in Ireland.

I venture to think that too little weight has been attached to the demoralisation which has been caused by this agitation. The noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack said that there had always been demoralisation talked of in Ireland so long as he could remember. I do not think that your Lordships will find during the ten years ending with 1905, so many paragraphs with respect to Ireland in the newspapers as have appeared within the last six months. That state of things is due to a demoralisation which I think noble Lords opposite will find more difficult to check and to put back than outrages, and, if it were possible that such an item as depreciation of moral rolling stock could be included in the Budget of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, I believe that Mr. Birrell would be able to claim a heavier debit on the part of Ireland to that account for the year during which he has been Chief Secretary than for any previous year in the recollection of the oldest Peer here present.

I desire not to travel over the ground which has been already covered, but to address this warning to the Government. We are asked to believe that order can be won back by conciliation. A good deal of that was found in the speech of the noble Earl, the late Viceroy, who must, I think, have had rather a rude shock when he was told from the Woolsack that his plan had very little chance of succeeding. He must realise that he has fallen between two stools, for he cannot gain the support of the Nationalists, according to those who have more the support of the Nationalist Party in this House than we have, and he certainly will forfeit the confidence of all those who believe in law and order if he tells us that law and order are only to be restored when the votes of the Nationalist Members can be obtained to the precise method by which it is to be done. The experience of every Chief Secretary is this, that every month that you wait in Ireland at this moment will make it more difficult for you to take the necessary steps to restore the law.

We have been told that the price of land in the districts affected is not going to be reduced in consequence of cattle-driving. We have not been told whether the Government do or do not intend to take powers compulsorily to take this land. I trust not; but how are they going to prevent the reduction of the price in consequence of this agitation? We have heard of homesteads which have been burnt, of lands left derelict, and of other land being occupied, even by those to whom it does not belong. Have the Government got the Land Judges in their pockets that they can decide that these lands will suffer nothing in valuation? It gives me great anxiety to know that the Government contemplate, as the outcome of this agitation, doing the very thing that the agitation was intended to produce—namely, the forcing the sale of these lands in order that they might be broken up.

We are put in a position of great difficulty in these debates. If we take hold of the language used by noble Lords opposite, if we emphasise the excuses and apologies which those who are standing in a white sheet to-night make, we are told that we are producing the very effect in Ireland which we least desire by giving prominence to their sympathy, or supposed sympathy, with these disturbances. I do not myself impute it in any way. Again, if we make a comparison between the state of Ireland, which they do not notice in the King's Speech, and the state of other countries, which they do, we are told that we are giving away our own country to foreign nations. It is extremely difficult for us to steer between these different courses. The noble Earl the late Viceroy told us he would have no part in any party pronouncements on this matter, and I think he might have addressed that warning to noble Lords opposite as well as to us. The way to stop these debates is to remove the cause of them by that effective and vigorous action which we were promised by the noble Marquess, Lord Ripon, last year, but which, after eight months of delay, we are still waiting for; and I venture to think that, so far from being in any way to blame for bringing this subject before the House, every step of this debate has given greater justification to my noble friend Lord Londonderry for having raised it. We have obtained valuable admissions from the Government as to the state of affairs. We have not obtained an effective promise as to the remedy. But we have at least been able to urge that those warnings which we addressed in the frankest manner last year from this side of the House have all been realised, and that it is solely from the want, on the part of the Government, of the desire to carry out the law, which lies ready to their hand, that Ireland has not before now obtained release from the disorders which your Lordships have all deprecated.

*THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Earl of CREWE): My Lords, I will try at this late hour not to detain your Lordships longer than I can help, but a great number of different points have been raised in the course of this debate, and I have been made the subject of a special catechism by the noble Marquess opposite. I am afraid, therefore, that I may have to detain your Lordships longer than I should desire to do at this hour.

My noble and learned friend on the Woolsack has dealt very fully with the degree of exaggeration which in our judgment has characterised so many of the speeches made from the opposite side of the House. My noble and learned friend dealt fully with the startling announcement made by the noble Marquess, Lord Londonderry, when he said that the state of Ireland now was worse than it was in 1888, the year after the Crimes Act was passed. When challenged, the noble Marquess said the state of intimidation which existed was now such that it was unnecessary to commit crime. What is the proof of that? Far fewer people are now boycotted than there were five or six years ago under the Government of the noble Lords opposite, and the only point which the noble Marquess might make would be if a very large number of farms were vacated owing to intimidation; but my noble friend Lord Beauchamp has dealt with that and pointed out that the number of grazing farms vacated, although somewhat slightly increased, is not so great as to cause any serious anxiety.

The noble Lord who has just sat down asked when had there been so many notices concerning Ireland in the Press. I am not surprised that there should be notices in the Press. A very great deal of money is spent by friends of noble Lords opposite in conducting a Press campaign, by which prominence is given to every act which can help to blacken the character of the Irish people. Everybody knows the manner in which pamphlets and various little documents making, as I think must be admitted, the very worst of the state of things in Ireland, are circulated broadcast, at what must be considerable expense to certain persons. One is almost tempted, in face of that, to exaggerate in the opposite sense and to say that the East Riding of Galway is a generally preferable place to the East Riding of Yorkshire. But, like the noble Lord on the Woolsack, I do not at all desire to underrate the gravity of such increase in the crime of the country as there has been.

The noble Marquess opposite asked me several questions, and the first was, What was the number of specially reported cases of agrarian crime for the half-year ended December, 1907, compared with the number in the first half of 1906, and also in the second half of 1906? In the first half of 1906 there were 65 cases of threatening letters, and 54 other outrages; total, 119. In the second half of 1906, there were 40 cases of threatening letters and 75 other outrages; total, 115. In the second half of 1907 there were 93 cases of threatening letters and 97 other charges; total, 190. The second question was: What was the number of offences in which loaded firearms were used? I am rather struck with the form of that question, because it is customary in making up a total of that kind to classify the very different variety of cases in which loaded firearms are used for the purpose of agrarian outrages. If a person is deliberately murdered and shot dead in the road firearms are used, but firearms are also used for the purpose of that odious and cowardly kind of intimidation called firing into dwellings, in 99 out of 100 of which cases nobody is injured. And, therefore, it is important, if we are not to exaggerate to distinguish those different classes of cases. As we all know, there has been no murder by firing, but there has been a certain increase of firing into dwellings. In the first half of 1906, the number was 33, in the second half of 1906, 24, and in the second half of 1907, 63, caused by the increase of this particular form of intimidation. I do not dispute the gravity of these facts, but everybody, I think, will agree that agrarian agitation even in the West of Ireland has not been marked by outrages of the desperate and criminal character which has marked, unhappily, some former agitations in Ireland.

With regard to police protection, the returns refer only to the first day of each quarter. On 1st January, 1906, there were 47 people under constant police protection, 178 under protection by patrol; total, 225. On 1st April, 41 constant, 157 patrol, total 198; 1st July, 44 constant, 158 patrol, total 202; 1st October, 52 constant, 154 patrol, total 206; 1st July, 1907, 50 constant, 167 patrol, total 217; 1st October, 64 constant, 198 patrol, total 262; 1st January, this year, 59 constant, and 222 patrol, total 281. On the other hand, if you go back to the year 1902, you will find 69 under constant protection, and 332 under protection by patrol, a total of 401.

The whole elaborate and ornate edifice constructed by noble Lords opposite rests on two assumptions, one that had they been in office there would have been no agitation, and the other that the agitation, which they suppose to be due to our being in office, might have been checked by the application of the Act of 1887. In one respect we are in a somewhat analogous position to that in which the noble Lords opposite found themselves when they came into office in 1886. They then found it necessary to extend the provisions of the Land Act of 1881, and the present Government were in a similar position with regard to the Act of 1903. Acts of Parliament, like other human acts, carry their consequences with them. Anybody who takes the trouble to look at the speeches made by Mr. Wyndham in the course of the debates on the Bill of 1903, will see that over and over again he expressed the opinion that grass lands would have to be dealt with in one form or another. I need not dwell on the indications of such an intention which are to be found in the Act itself. The moment it is admitted that peasant proprietorship is to be the rule in Ireland the contrast between the ordinary state of things and the grass lands becomes very remarkable, and it is hardly possible that some form of agitation should not ensue. I maintain that whatever Government had been in power this agitation would have taken place. Lord Londonderry talked of our conniving at cattle-driving. Why should we sympathise with it or connive at it?

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: I should like to explain that my point was that the speeches of Ministers led the agitators and the people to think that they had connived at their conduct.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: I think the noble Lord went somewhat further, but if not I will make no point of that. We saw what the necessary trend of legislation would be, and we did our best by appointing the Commission presided over so ably by Lord Dudley, to go into the question of congestion. It is perfectly evident that what I again describe as stupid and mischievous acts, such as cattle-driving, could only hamper us by alienating sober, steady opinion on this subject. I repeat that no extra acre of land will be diverted from its purpose in consequence of this agitation, and not a penny less will be paid for any acre of land in consequence of its having taken place. Its only effect that I can see will be that some possible claimants to the holdings might be debarred from obtaining them by having lost their character through having taken part in this agitation. But equally, there is no reason why we should do any less than we intended to do in any case.

The noble Marquess, Lord Lansdowne, in his opening speech, marked by unusual severity of tone, once more raised the old point against redressing grievances so long as agitation takes place. That has always been the plea of arbitrary government. I was sorry to hear from what the noble Marquess said that he appeared to be hostile to the idea of any kind of migration. He made a curious slip in the course of his speech when he said, that if it was proposed to migrate people from Connaught into Roscommon, he was not at all sure that it would give satisfaction. I have no doubt the noble Marquess meant Connemara. A great deal has been said on the subject of cattle-driving itself, and I, too, I am sorry to say, have a rather serious complaint to make against the noble Earl, Lord Donoughmore. Lord Denman has dealt fully and fairly with Lord Donoughmore so far as his complaints against that noble Earl is concerned; but I have also a complaint as to the manner in which I have been treated by the noble Earl, who has accused me of only saying with regard to cattle-driving that it was not so bad as cattle-maiming, and of saying nothing more in the way of reprobation of this practice. When my noble friend Lord Beauchamp quoted some passages of reprobation the noble Earl offered no apology or withdrawal.

*THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE: I have since compared what I said with my notes. The noble Lord had interrupted me very sharply, and I accidently passed over several sentences of my notes. I had meant to make it clear that my complaint was limited to the fact that the noble Lord had not expressed his reprobation of what Lord Denman said last year.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: I accept the noble Earl's explanation, but I hope he will in future keep a sharper eye on his notes, because what he said was by no means fair to me. Several noble Lords opposite, beginning with the noble Marquess the Leader of the Opposition, positively complained of the lull that had taken place in cattle-driving—at least, they apparently attached no kind of importance to it. I quite agree that if my right hon. friend the Chief Secretary had not such a good temper, he might well lose it when he hears some of the reasons given for the cessation of cattle-driving. It is said that it is avowedly only dropped for the moment and that it will before long be taken up again. It should be remembered that those who make these threats have to make the best of a bad case. They cannot admit, what I believe to be the fact, that they have discovered the essential stupidity of the practice and that it has become extremely unpopular with important classes in Ireland itself.

The Government have been twitted for putting into operation a Statute of the extreme old age of Edward III., while we shrank from applying the Crimes Act of 1887. We do not at all object to old Statutes of criminal justice. What we do object to are Statutes of a more novel application. Moreover, the Statute of Edward III. is one that is absolutely familiar to everybody in Ireland. Every magistrates' commission and every commission of assize is founded upon it. We are asked why we preferred this ancient Statute, under which a single magistrate acts without appeal, to Clause 2 of the Crimes Act, where two resident magistrates act with an appeal. All that the single magistrate can do under the Statute of Edward III. is to call on a man to find sureties for his good behaviour and in default of that to go to prison. But the two resident magistrates under Clause 2 of the Crimes Act can send a man to prison for six months with hard labour. If Lord Londonderry were a resident magistrate, I should be quite willing to appear before him and find sureties for good behaviour, but I should object to go before the noble Marquess if he were empowered to send me to prison for six months, and I should not be in the least consoled by having an appeal to Lord Ashbourne. The fact is, the two cases are not comparable.

In reply to the noble Marquess, I may say that applications to bind over can be heard out of court and may be disposed of by a single magistrate whether in or out of court, and in neither case can the person against whom the application is made give evidence in his own behalf, though it is open to him to make a statement. It has been held by some judges that he should not be permitted to call evidence to contradict the information exhibited against him, inasmuch as the proceeding is of a preventive and precautionary character and not penal; but this dictum is not habitually followed in practice. Magistrates invariably allow the persons to call witnesses if they desire, and cases have been adjourned to enable such evidence to be called. When the police are the applicants for sureties against any person or persons, they do not object to evidence being called. As the noble Marquess knows, there is no power of appeal. I think that fully answers the questions which the noble Marquess put to me.

Then it was said by Lord Langford that the effect of our policy would be to ruin the cattle industry. In 1906 the number of cattle exported from Ireland was 775,344, in 1907 the number was 841,973, showing an increase of 66,600; and, moreover, higher prices were obtained in the latter as compared with the former year. In these circumstances, to speak of the Irish cattle trade as being on the road to ruin, is one of the exaggerations against which we have the right to protest. I do not want to go further into the dispute which has raged as to how far the fact that you are not able to get evidence is germane to the present discussion. It is perfectly true, I think, as the noble and learned Lord said, that it by no means applies to all the cases which have been heard; but still there are cases in which it certainly does apply. And, again, noble Lords do not confine themselves always to the matter in hand. One noble Lord instanced the dastardly attack which was made on Mr. and Mrs. White. No amount of Coercion Acts or Crimes Acts or anything else would have helped there, simply because no person has been accused of the crime. The same argument applies to the fact, also mentioned by Lord Clonbrock, that people are afraid to give evidence because they are in fear of their lives. Whatever happens you cannot do more than give police protection. There have been cases where people have given evidence in prosecutions for very serious crimes, when other means than that of police protection have been found for safeguarding them, but, as a general rule, you cannot do more than offer police protection; and, so far as that is concerned, the danger to these people is likely to be increased the more convictions you get, because you may be sure that where a conviction takes place there is likely, if the witnesses are in danger, to be more serious consequences to them. The noble Marquess also asked me a question as to the claims for malicious injuries. I am afraid the document containing this information is rather a long one.

LORD ASHBOURNE: Will it be circulated as a Paper?

*THE EARL OF CREWE: I should be glad to have it circulated, if that will meet the wishes of the noble Marquess.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: I should like to have the most important figures now.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: The figures are for the whole of Ireland, and they include, for instance, some large claims in Belfast City in the last quarter of 1907. I do not, therefore, know that without analysis they will be of very much use to the noble Marquess.

LORD ASHBOURNE: Give the figures for Limerick, Meath, and Roscommon.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: What I meant to ask for were the figures in connection with those parts of Ireland where outrage have taken place.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: In Meath the figures are very low. In the quarter commencing January, 1907, £140 was claimed and £110 given; in the October quarter £41 was claimed and £25 given;

and in another quarter £74 was claimed and £60 given.

LORD ASHBOURNE: In Meath there are claims of £2,700 outstanding now.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: These are all claims made at quarter sessions. I think it is hardly useful to go into the figures now, but I will have them circulated and then they can be looked into. The general view of the Government in regard to the whole question of the application of the Crimes Act is this, that under no circumstances ought we to make any use of the Crimes Act unless there is a case which, in the opinion of the Irish Executive, would justify us in coming to Parliament and asking for special powers. We have never disputed that in Ireland, as in any other country, there may come a state of affairs when the ordinary law breaks down. But we do regard any application of a different law in Ireland as being a very serious matter indeed.

The law of Scotland has been referred to as being in some respects similar to this Irish law. I am not acquainted with Scot law, it being disfigured by a terminology which I am unable to understand; but I doubt whether it contains anything approaching the principal provision of the Crimes Act of 1887. Some of the provisions of that Act are harmless and useful. There is one which I have always thought might be embodied with advantage in the English law—namely, the power to hold an inquiry without a prisoner. But the particular provisions of the Crimes Act to which noble lords opposite attach importance are a different matter. In one sense we should have been entirely justified at any moment in bringing in the Crimes Act. We have always held that so long as the Irish people are denied the right to manage their own affairs the Government may at any moment be placed in the position of having to coerce them. But from a sense of expediency we have not desired to use those powers. There is a very marked difference of opinion as to the people who are responsible for this cattle-driving. If Lord Lansdowne's view is the correct one, and the whole business had no political significance, but was merely the act of a few peasants who wanted to get somebody else's property, of course its importance would be infinitely less than it is. But it is an agrarian, and thereby a semi-political, movement, and in that its real gravity consists.

The Irish are naturally a far more law-abiding people than the English. I believe it was Bagehot, the most acute political observer, I suppose, of the latter part of last century, who said that the natural impulse in this country was to resist authority. I believe that to be true. But in Ireland it is the other way; the Irishman looks for someone to obey; the whole religious history of the country shows it; the popular religion is a religion of authority. The curious absence of anything like real animosity against the police which has distinguished Ireland tends in the same direction. Why the Irishman dislikes the law as it now stands is because it is associated with the garrison, to which Lord Oranmore said he was so proud to belong. Foreign garrisons, I am afraid, are not always a popular institution. Irishmen dislike the law because it is connected with an administration which they do not trust and in which they have no part. For that reason we believe the effect of putting the Crimes Act into operation would be exactly opposite to that which noble Lords on the other side anticipate. If you put in prison one Member of Parliament who made an unwise or foolish speech, there would be plenty of others to take his place. The case of noble Lords opposite seems to me to have broken down, because they have not brought any evidence—nothing but the merest assertion—in support of their statement that the application of the Act would have stopped the agitation. From our point of view, the facts are all the other way, and my right hon. friend Mr. Birrell has acted with the united support of all his colleagues.

On Question, the said Address agreed to, *nemine dissentiente*, and ordered to be presented to His Majesty by the Lords with White Staves.

House adjourned at five minutes before eight o'clock, till to-morrow, half-past ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 3rd February, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Belfast Corporation Bill.—" To empower the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Citizens of the city of Belfast to acquire the undertaking of the Cavehill and Whitewell Tramway Company; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Blackburn Corporation Bill.—" For extending the boundaries of the county borough of Blackburn, and to authorise the corporation of that borough to construct new tramways in the borough; to make street and bridge improvements; to borrow money; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Blaydon and Ryton Water (Transfer) Bill.—" To authorise the sale of the water undertakings of the Blaydon Urban District Council and the Ryton Urban District Council; to confer powers upon the Weardale and Consett Water Company, and the Newcastle and Gateshead Water Company; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Bromley and Crays Gas Bill.—" To provide for the amalgamation of the Crays Gas Company with the Bromley Gas Consumers' Company; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Burnley Corporation Bill.—" To authorise the Corporation of Burnley to construct additional waterworks, tramways, and street improvements, and to extend the boundaries of the county borough of Burnley; to amend and extend the Acts relating to the said borough; to confer further powers with respect to the supply of gas, water, and electricity; to make further provisions for the health, local government, and improvement of the said borough; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Bury and District Joint Water Board Bill.—" To extend the time for the compulsory purchase of lands for and completion of works authorised by The Bury and District Joint Water Board Act, 1903," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Cheshire Lines Committee Bill.—" To enable the Cheshire Lines Committee to acquire additional lands; to extend the time for the sale of superfluous lands; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

City of Glasgow Bill.—" To amend The Glasgow Building Regulations Act, 1900," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Conway and Colwyn Bay Joint Water Board Bill.—" To confirm the construction by the Conway and Colwyn Bay Joint Water Supply Board of their existing works and to confer upon them further powers; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Criccieth Water and Improvement Bill.—" To authorise the Urban District Council of Criccieth to supply water and to acquire the undertaking of the Criccieth Waterworks Company, Limited; and to make further provision in regard to the local government and improvement of the district; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Dartford Gas Bill.—"For conferring further powers upon the Dartford Gas Company; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Derby Gas Bill.—"For conferring further powers upon the Derby Gas Light and Coke Company," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Draycott Gas Bill.—"To confer further powers upon the Draycott Gas Company; to repeal certain powers of the Long Eaton Gas Company; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Dublin and Central Ireland Electric Power Bill.—"For incorporating and conferring powers on the Dublin and Central Ireland ElectricPower Company; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Dublin and South Eastern Railway Bill.—"To confer further powers on the Dublin and South Eastern Railway Company in relation to their general undertaking and their separate undertakings of the New Ross and Waterford Extension Railways and the City of Dublin Junction Railways; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Dublin Corporation Bill.—"To extend the powers of the Corporation of Dublin under the Housing of the Working Classes Acts; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Dublin Corporation (Various Powers) Bill.—"To confer further powers upon the Corporation of Dublin in relation to the health, local and good government, and improvement of the city; to amend the constitution of the Dublin Port and Docks Board; to provide for representation of the Corporation upon the District Board of Conservators of the River Liffey; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Dundalk Urban District Council Bill.—"To amend the borrowing powers of the Urban District Council of Dundalk; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Finchley Urban District Council Bill.—"To confer further powers on the Urban District Council of Finchley in relation to their electricity undertaking; and to make further and better provision with regard to the improvement, health, local government, and finance of the district; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Garw and Ogmore Gas Bill.—"For conferring further powers upon the Garw and Ogmore Gas Company," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Glyn Corrwg Urban District Council Bill.—"To empower the Glyn Corrwg Urban District Council to construct sewerage works, waterworks, and new roads, and to confer further powers upon the Council in relation to their water undertaking; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time and ordered to be read a second time

Gosport Gas Bill.—"To confer further powers upon the Gosport Gas and Coke Company," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Great Eastern Railway (General Powers) Bill.—"For conferring further powers upon the Great Eastern Railway Company; for extending the time limit by former Acts for the completion of works and the purchase of lands; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Great Eastern Railway (Steamboats) Bill.—"To amend the powers of the Great Eastern Railway Company with respect to the use of steam vessels," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Greystones Gas Bill.—"For incorporating and conferring powers on the Greystones Gas Company; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Harwich Docks Bill.—"To incorporate a company and to authorise the company to construct docks, sea walls, and other works at Harwich, in the county of Essex; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Hastings Harbour Bill.—"To revive and extend the period limited for the compulsory purchase of lands, and to extend the period limited for the construction and completion of the harbour and works authorised by the Hastings Harbour Act, 1890, and the Hastings Harbour Act, 1897; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Holderness Water Bill.—"To incorporate and confer powers upon the Holdernes Water Company for supplying water within the borough of Hedon and adjacent places in the East Riding of the county of York," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Hull and Barnsley Railway Bill.—"To extend the time for the purchase of lands for and for the completion of certain works authorised by The Hull, Barnsley, and West Riding Junction Railway and Dock (South Yorkshire Extension Lines) Act, 1902; to authorise the Hull and Barnsley Railway Company to construct new railways and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Bill.—"To authorise the Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Company to acquire additional lands and to make road works for the purposes of their dock at Immingham; to authorise the said Dock Company and the Great Central Railway Company to acquire additional lands for the purpose of forming junctions between the Dock Company's railways and the Grimsby District Light Railway; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Knott End Railway Bill.—"To extend the period for the completion of the railway authorised by The Knott End Railway Act, 1898, to empower the Knott End Railway Company to construct an extension of their railway from Pilling to Galgate, in the county of Lancaster, and to provide for the acquisition by that Company of the undertaking of the Garstang and Knott End Railway Company; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Leeds Corporation Bill.—"To empower the Corporation of Leeds to acquire lands and construct works for the disposal of sewage and to lay down tramways; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Leicester Corporation Bill.—"To extend the limits for the supply of gas and water by the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the county borough of Leicester; and to confer further powers with respect to electricity, milk supply, and streets and buildings; and to make further provision with respect to sanitary matters and for the good government of the borough; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Lincoln Corporation Bill.—"To confer further powers upon the Corporation of the city of Lincoln with respect to their water undertaking and to authorise the Corporation to construct additional waterworks and to extend their limits for the supply of water; to consolidate the loans and sinking funds of the Corporation and to borrow money; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Liverpool Corporation (General Powers) Bill.—"For empowering the Corporation of the city of Liverpool to execute a widening of Hornby Road; to construct a tramway in the township of Litherland and to establish a compensation insurance fund in respect of their officers, servants, and workmen; for making further provisions relating to the water undertaking of the Corporation; for making further regulations with respect to buildings, sewers, and sanitary matters; for making certain licensing and registration regulations; for authorising the Corporation to purchase the undertaking of the Liverpool Crematorium Company, Limited; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Liverpool Corporation (Streets and Buildings) Bill.—"For conferring on the Corporation of the city of Liverpool further powers for the better regulation of buildings, the formation of streets, and the laying out and development of estates within the city; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

London County Council (General Powers) Bill.—"To make sanitary provisions applicable to the administrative county of London; to confer powers upon the London County Council and the councils of certain metropolitan boroughs; to make provisions with respect to the drainage of parts of the metropolitan borough of Hackney and the urban districts of Tottenham and Willesden; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

London Port and Docks Bill.—"To make provision for the improvement of the Port of London, and to impose rates on goods imported into the said Port; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Louth and East Coast Railway (Transfer) Bill.—"For transferring to and vesting in the Great Northern Railway Company the undertaking of the Louth and East Coast Railway Company; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Macclesfield and District Tramways (Abandonment) Bill.—"For the abandonment of the Macclesfield and District Tramways; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Madras Railway Company (Purchase) Bill.—"To provide for the vesting of the railways and other property of the Madras Railway Company in the Secretary of State in Council of India; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Manchester Corporation Bill.—"To confer further powers upon the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Citizens of the city of Manchester with reference to the construction of waterworks, street works, and sewerage works, and otherwise for the better local government and improvement of the city; to extend the city; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Margate Corporation Bill.—"To confer further powers upon the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the borough of Margate with regard to the audit of accounts; and to make further provision with regard to the health, local government, and improvement of the borough; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill.—"To revive and extend the period limited by the Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Acts, 1903 and 1904, for the compulsory purchase of lands, and to extend the period limited by those Acts for the construction of the railways and works by those Acts authorised; to authorise the county councils of the counties of Westmeath and Meath, and the Corporation of Drogheda to grant guarantees in respect of the capital of the Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Company; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

North-East London Railway Bill.—"For conferring further powers upon the North-East London Railway Company," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

North Eastern Railway Bill.—"To confer additional powers upon the North Eastern Railway Company for the construction of new railways and other works and the acquisition of lands, and upon the Midland and North Eastern Railway Companies Committee for the acquisition of lands; to provide for the transfer to the South Yorkshire Joint Line Committee of certain powers of the Hull and Barnsley Railway Company; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private, Bills.

Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways Bill.—"To further extend the time limited for the purchase of lands and also for the construction and completion of the tramways and works authorised by the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways Act, 1903; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Padiham Urban District Council Bill.—"To confer further powers upon the Padiham Urban District Council in relation to their gas and water undertakings; and for other purposes." presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Rochdale Corporation Bill.—"To confer further powers upon the Mayor, Alderman, and Burgesses of the Borough of Rochdale with reference to their water, tramway, and electrical undertakings; to authorise the construction of a new street; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Seaham Harbour Dock Bill—"To enable the Seaham Harbour Dock Company to raise additional capital; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Sligo and Arigna Railway Bill.—"To incorporate the Sligo and Arigna Railway Company, and to empower them to construct railways in the counties of Sligo and Roscommon; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Slough Urban District Water Bill.—"To authorise the Urban District Council of Slough to purchase the undertaking of the Slough Waterworks Company and to supply water within the urban district of Slough and the neighbourhood thereof; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Southwell District Gas Bill.—"To incorporate and confer powers on the Southwell District Gas Company; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

South-West Surburban Water Bill.—"To empower the South-West Surburban Water Company to raise additional capital; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Stockport Corporation Bill.—"To empower the Corporation of Stockport to construct a temporary tramroad and other works in connection with their waterworks; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Swinton and Mexbrough Gas Bill.—"To incorporate and confer powers upon the Swinton and Mexbrough Gas Light Company," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Thames Conservancy Bill.—"To confer further money powers on the Conservators of the River Thames for the deepening widening, and improvement of its bed and channel between Gravesend and London Bridge; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

West Bridgford Urban District Water Council Bill.—"To empower the West Bridgford Urban District Council to acquire from the Corporation of the city of Nottingham the portion of the water undertaking of the Corporation which is situate in the district of the Council; and to authorise the Council to construct a pumping station, reservoir, and other works for the supply of water; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

West Riding County Council Bill.—"For transferring to the county council of the West Riding of Yorkshire the powers and duties of the Standing Joint Committee of the said Riding, and for dissolving the said Joint Committee; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Widnes Corporation Bill.—"To confer further powers upon the Corporation of Widnes in relation to their water, gas, and market undertakings and the Widnes and Runcorn Bridge undertaking; to authorise them to provide and work omnibuses and to make further and better provision for the health, improvement, and good government of the borough of Widnes; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Wolverhampton Corporation Bill.—"To extend the time for the construction of tramways by the Corporation of Wolverhampton; and to make further provision in regard to the tramway and water undertakings of the Corporation; and the health, local government, and improvement of their borough, and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

PETITIONS.

LICENSED PREMISES (EXCLUSION OF CHILDREN).

Petitions for legislation: From Acock's Green; Aston; Altrincham; Bexley Heath (two); Bootle; Brockley; Dartford; Deptford; Doncaster; East London; Felixstowe; Havant (two); Hayling Island; Isleworth; Liverpool (two); London; Manor Park; Needham Market (two); North Hackney; Rawtenstall; Romford; Sale and Ashton on Mersey; Sidcup and Foots Cray (two); Stoke Newington; and, Walton and Trimley; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING ACTS.

Petition from Keswick, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE.

Petitions for extension to women: From Fareham; and, Havant; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY.

Petitions for legislation: From Bexley; Burnley; South Lambeth; and, Tunbridge Wells; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).

Copy presented, of Licence granted to John Lee under the provisions of the

Penal Servitude Acts, 1853 to 1891, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A of The Penal Servitude Act, 1864 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Copy presented, of List of Evening Schools under the administration of the Board of Education for the school year ending 31st July, 1906 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Return of Evictions in Ireland for the quarter ended 31st December, 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION.

Copy presented, of Return of Advances made under The Irish Land Act, 1903, during the month of February, 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of the Poor Law Relief (Ireland) (House of Commons Return) Order, 1907 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

OTTAWA MINT.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 25th January, 1908, directing that the accounts of the Expenditure out of the Ottawa Mint Annuity be examined and audited by the Comptroller and Auditor-General [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

IMPERIAL OTTOMAN GUARANTEED LOAN OF 1855.

Copy presented, of Account for the year 1907 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SUGAR CONVENTION (COMMERCIAL No. 1, 1908).

Copy presented, of Correspondence respecting the adhesion of Russia to the Brussels Sugar Convention of the 5th March, 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRANSVAAL.

Copy presented, of Further Correspondence relating to Legislation affecting Asiatics in the Transvaal [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

DEATHS FROM ALCOHOL (IRELAND)

Return ordered, "giving Statistics showing the number of Deaths in Ireland due to Alcohol and Tuberculosis for the twelve months ending on the 31st day of December, 1907."—(*Mr. Sloan.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES

Boilers of H.M.S. "Dreadnought."

SIR MAURICE LEVY (Leicestershire, Loughborough): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether his attention has been called to a speech implying that the boilers of H.M.S. "Dreadnought" were made abroad; whether he will say by what firm and where they were made; whether the order for the boilers was given by the present or the late Government; and whether the payment for the boilers was authorised by the present or the late Chancellor of the Exchequer.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) My attention has already been drawn to the speech to which my hon. friend refers. The boilers of H.M.S. "Dreadnought" were made by Messrs. Vickers, Sons, and Maxim, as principal contractors, assisted by Messrs. Babcock and Wilcox, as sub-contractors, at the works at Barrow and Renfrew respectively. These boilers were made under Admiralty inspection, as is the case with all machinery for His Majesty's ships. All payments on account of these boilers mere made in the financial year 1905–6, the first instalment on 8th November, 1905, and the last on the 14th March, 1906.

Gibraltar Graving Docks.

MR. BOWLES (Lambeth, Norwood): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can state, for each of the years 1906 and 1907, the total number of days upon which each of the graving-docks at Gibraltar was occupied in docking His Majesty's ships, and the total number of His Majesty's ships docked in each.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The total number of days upon which each of the graving docks at Gibraltar was occupied during the years in question is as follows:—

	1906.	1907.
No. 1 Dock - - -	59*	191
No. 2 Dock - - -	157	160
No. 3 Dock - - -	247	174

The number of ships docked is as follows—

	1906.	1907.
No. 1 Dock - - -	16	7
No. 2 Dock - - -	17	8
No. 3 Dock - - -	2†	8

Port of London—Guaranteed Stock.

Mr. WOOD (Glasgow, St. Rollox): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he has received an answer from the London County Council to his inquiry whether the council is willing to assist the proposed Port of London authority by giving its guarantee to the new stock, as recommended by the Royal Commission on the Port of London and proposed in the Bill of the late Government.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Yes, Sir. But though I emphasised the importance of the Board of Trade knowing the attitude and intentions of the London County Council while preparing their Bill, I do not gather from the reply I received that the matter has been discussed by the Council. That reply informed me that the Rivers Committee were unable to recommend the Council to come to any decision until they knew the main lines on which the Government intend to deal with the matter, but that some of their members would be glad to confer with me on the whole subject. I shall of course gladly avail myself of this offer, and I am already in personal touch with the Chairman of the Council and of the Rivers Committee. I am, however, quite without any official information as to the views of the Council as a whole.

Retrenchment in Transvaal Civil Service and South African Constabulary.

Sir GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend); To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies how many civil servants in the Transvaal, other than members of the South African Constabulary, and not transferred from service elsewhere, have been retrenched; how many of the retrenched have received compensation; how many have received pensions; how many have received both compensation and pension; and how many have received new appointments from the Colonial Office.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) A Return showing the number of retrenched officials between 1st May and 30th October last is being laid, but the information in the possession of the Colonial Office does not enable me to answer the Question in detail. A number of the trenchments took place under Lord Milner and Lord Selborne before the grant of responsible government. Out of fifty-four retrenched officials who had applied for re-employment up to the middle of January, some fourteen have been offered new appointments by the Colonial Office, and one by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs at the instance of this Department.

Sir GILBERT PARKER: To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies how many of the South African Constabulary of the Transvaal have been retrenched; and of these how many have received compensation, how many have received pension, how many have received both compensation and pension, and how many have received new appointments from the Colonial Office.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) Reductions in the South African Constabulary have been proceeding for some years but I cannot give the detailed information asked for.

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* No. 1 Dock was not completed until 12th March, 1906.

† Includes "Assistance" in dock for eight months.

Russia, Persia and the Afghan Frontier.

MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether the point at which the line referred to in Article II. of the arrangement with Russia regarding Persia leaves the Afghan frontier is determined; and, if so, what is that point.

(*Answered by Secretary Sir Edward Grey.*) I beg to refer the hon. Member to the reply on this subject given to the hon. Member for South Kensington on the 30th ultimo, to the effect that the point referred to is that on the Afghan frontier which is nearest to Gazik.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, at what point the line mentioned in Article II. of the arrangement concerning Persia in the Anglo-Russian Convention, which goes by way of Gazik, Birjand, and Kerman to Bunder Abbas, leaves the Afghanistan frontier.

(*Answered by Secretary Sir Edward Grey.*) I beg to refer the hon. Member to the reply on this subject given to the hon. Member for South Kensington on the 30th ultimo, to the effect that the point referred to is that on the Afghan frontier which is nearest to Gazik.

Grievances of Naval and Military Men in the Civil Service.

MR. B. S. STRAUS (Tower Hamlets, Mile End): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether anything has been done in regard to the recommendation of Sir Edward Ward's Committee, which reported in February, 1906, that early steps should be taken to obtain fresh legislation to remedy the legitimate grievances of naval and military men in the Civil Service; and whether, if nothing has been done, he will consider the question as soon as possible.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) The recommendation to which the hon. Member refers is, presumably, that containing in Sections 43 and 44 of the Committee's Report, that service in the Army and Navy of a satisfactory character which has not earned pension should reckon towards superannuation in the case of men appointed to established position in the Civil Service. The recommendation has been considered, and it has been decided not to propose legislation to give effect to it. The naval and military services have their own conditions for pensions, which are not affected by the fact of subsequent civil employment to which different conditions attach.

Languages and Civil Service Examinations.

MR. KETTLE (Tyrone, E.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he can state what are the competitive Civil Service examinations for which languages in addition to English are specified in the programmes; and whether Irish and Welsh are included among these additional languages.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) For an Answer tothe first part of his Question I must refer the hon. Member to the Stationery Office publication (which I will send to him) entitled "Abstract of Rules and Regulations respecting Examinations for the Home Civil Service, the Army, the Navy, the Civil Service of India." In no case, I understand, is Welsh a subject of examination. Irish is a compulsory subject for the qualifying examination of candidates for the position of Organiser of Irish Language Instruction; but this position has not been filled by competition. It is an optional subject in the examinations of candidates for the situation of Assistant in the Irish Antiquities section of the Dublin Museum of Science and Art, and also for that of Assistant Organiser of Kindergarten Teaching under the National Education Office; but the second of these situations is not filled by competition.

Expenditure of English and Irish Agricultural Departments.

MR. BARNARD (Kidderminster): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will state the net annual expenditure for the last four known financial years of the English and Irish Agricultural Departments respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) I subjoin two statements giving the information which my hon. friend requires :—

Board of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Net expenditure, inclusive of Expenditure out of the Cattle Pleuro-Pneumonia Account of Great Britain, in each of the last four financial years.

			Net Expenditure.
		£	£
1903–4	Charge on Votes - - - - - -	111,804	
	Charge on Local Taxation Accounts - -	16,000	
		127,804	
	Less : added to balance (Cattle Pleuro-Pneumonia Account) - - - -	686	
		127,118	127,118
1904–5	Charge on Votes - - - - - -	113,907	
	Charge on Local Taxation Accounts - -	12,000	
		125,907	
	Less : added to balance (Cattle Pleuro-Pneumonia Account) - - - -	1,278	
		124,629	124,629
1905–6	Charge on Votes - - - - - -	117,608	
	Charge on Local Taxation Accounts - -	7,000	
	Reduction of balance (Cattle Pleuro-Pneumonia Account - - - - - - -	3,412	
		128,020	128,020
1906–7	Charge on Votes - - - - - -	127,261	
	Charge on Local Taxation Accounts - -	14,500	
		141,761	
	Less : added to balance (Cattle Pleuro-Pneumonia Account) - - - -	1,103	
		140,658	140,658
	Total for four years - - -		520,425

Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland.

Net Annual Expenditure for the last Four Financial Years.

———	1903–4.	1904–5.	1905–6.	1906–7.	Total.
	£	£	£	£	£
Parliamentary Vote (including Cattle Pleuro-Pneumonia Account, Sub-head F.†) - - -	131,425	137,098	143,023	144,792	556,338
General Cattle Diseases Fund, Ireland, 57 and 58 Vic., c. 57, s. 73 (3)	1,783*	2,354*	—	—	4,137
Endowment Fund, 62 and 63 Vic., c. 50, s. 16 - - -	156,193	249,612	211,577	214,347	831,729
	289,401	389,064	354,600	359,139	1,392,204

* These sums were required to meet the deficiencies of the amounts of the Grants-in-Aid included in the Estimates under Sub-head F of the Parliamentary Vote, for swine fever, &c. purposes, in accordance with the terms of Section 73 (3) of The Diseases of Animals Act, 1894, 57 and 58 Vic., c. 57.

† The expenditure under Sub-head F, exclusive of the sums provided from the General, Cattle Diseases Fund, as stated in the preceding paragraph, was :—

	£
1903–4 - - - - -	16,177
1904–5 - - - - -	16,200
1905–6 - - - - -	13,216
1906–7 - - - - -	12,522
Total - - -	£58,115

American Gooseberry Mildew in Great Britain.

MR. ROWLANDS (Kent, Dartford): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether any of the counties of England are affected by the American gooseberry mildew; and, if so, will the Board issue a Return showing the counties affected, together with the acreage of gooseberry plantation, and also the acreage which is affected by the disease.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) The counties of Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Warwickshire, Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire (Parts of Holland), Norfolk, the Isle of Ely, Cambridgeshire, and Huntingdonshire are at present affected with American gooseberry mildew. We will endeavour to obtain and bring together the information for which my hon. friend asks in the latter part of his Question, and perhaps he will communicate with me on the subject.

Dutch Cheshire Cheese.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether his attention has been called to the fact that a considerable quantity of Dutch cheese is being put on the English market and labelled in the retail shops as Dutch Cheshire, and that the producers of genuine Cheshire cheese are suffering heavily in consequence; and whether, in view of the provisions of the Act passed to protect the public from the sale of food under false description, the Board of Agriculture will at once take the necessary steps to give to the British farmers and the British public the protection to which they are entitled.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) We have for some time past been making inquiry into this matter, but up to the present we have not obtained any definite information that any offence under the Merchandise Marks Acts has been committed. The matter will continue to receive attention, and proceedings will at once be instituted if the necessary evidence of any infringement of the law is forthcoming.

Value of British Imports and Exports.

Mr. RUSSELL REA (Gloucester): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will state what is the value of British imports and the value of exports of British produce in the year 1907, calculated according to the Board of Trade index number on the basis of 1873 values, on the assumption that the average value of articles of our import and export trade have followed the course of general prices, excluding ships from the figures of exports in 1907.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) On the assumption suggested by my hon. friend the figures would be as follows. I take, of course, no responsibility for the correctness of the assumption:—

——	Values as Declared.	Estimated Value according to the prices prevailing in 1873 (based on the Board of Trade Index Number).
	Million pounds.	Million pounds.
Imports: Total - - -	645·9	933·2
Exports:		
British and Irish -	416·2*	600·7*
Foreign and Colonial -	92·0	132·8

* Excluding the value of ships and boats (new) with their machinery. The declared value of these items amounted to £10,000,000.

Cattle-Driving in Ireland.

Mr. STAVELEY-HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many cases of cattle and sheep-driving have been reported to the police since 30th June, 1907; in how many cases injury was caused to the animals, stating as far as possible the nature of the injury; and in how many cases the owners, police, or other persons received injuries.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) Three hundred and thirty-four cases of cattle-driving have been reported since 30th June, 1907. In twenty-seven cases it was stated that the animals had been injured. In the great majority of these cases the alleged injury consisted in the deterioration of the cattle through overdriving, which caused lameness or exhaustion. In one instance one of the cattle was found dead from exhaustion. In another case some sheep were painted green. In another the tails of three bullocks were cut, but in this instance the drive is stated to have been due to a family dispute and not to the anti-grazing agitation. Claims for compensation were made in twenty-two cases. In seven of these compensation has been granted; eleven claims are pending, and four have been dropped. In no case has an owner received personal injury. In two cases police patrols were assaulted.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Haulbowline Extension Works.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork County, E.): I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty whether he can state the rate of wages paid to skilled and unskilled workers respectively in the Norwegian quarries, from which granite is to be procured for the extension works at Haulbowline, and the number of working hours per day.

I beg also to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty whether he is aware that the specification originally sent to all the Irish firms invited to tender for the lengthening of the dry dock at Haulbowline contained the condition that limestone should be the material used for the principal part of the masonry work; whether all the Irish firms were afforded an opportunity of amending their tenders when permission was subsequently given to substitute Norwegian granite for limestone; if he can state the reasons which influenced the Admiralty to alter the original specification and permit the substitution of Norwegian granite for limestone; and whether he is aware that quantities of Irish limestone were used in the construction of the great docks at Cardiff opened last year by His Majesty the King.

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. LAMBERT, Devonshire, South Molton): As regards the first Question, the Admiralty have no information on the subject. As regards the second; Irish stone was originally specified for certain parts of the masonry, but, between the time of inviting tenders and the date for their delivery, certain of the firms requested permission to substitute granite for Irish stone. Granite, in the opinion of the Admiralty, being a better material, alternative tender prices were sanctioned, and all firms were treated exactly alike. In every case where alternative prices were quoted granite was considerably lower in price than Irish stone. The Admiralty, with every desire to assist local industry, could not exclude the use of a material which was superior in quality and cheaper in price.

Gibraltar Graving Docks.

MR. BOWLES (Lambeth, Norwood): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can state, for each of the years 1906 and 1907, the total number of days upon which each of the graving docks at Gibraltar was occupied in docking His Majesty's ships, and the total number of His Majesty's ships docked in each.

MR. LAMBERT: The total number of days upon which each of the graving docks at Gibraltar was occupied during the years in question is as follows—

	1906.	1907.
No. 1 Dock - - -	59*	191
No. 2 Dock - - -	157	160
No. 3 Dock - - -	247	174

The number of ships docked is as follows—

	1906.	1907.
No. 1 Dock - - -	16	7
No. 2 Dock - - -	17	8
No. 3 Dock - - -	2 †	8

Volunteer Corps Fund.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War how Volunteer corps are to obtain funds to carry on their administration until the County Associations are provided with cash to satisfy their requirements, in the absence of any adequate security for the usual advance from banks.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): It is not anticipated that Volunteer corps will experience any difficulty in obtaining advances from banks as usual, when such advances are required. It is well known that it is part of the scheme which Parliament has approved to free the Volunteer corps from their legitimate liabilities before they are transformed into territorial units.

Promotion of Army Officers.

MR. MORTON (Sutherland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether steps will be taken to consider the position of officers in various regiments who have been superseded, and promotion consequently retarded, by officers who have been brought into regiments from the recently-disbanded regiments; and whether any steps will be taken to promote the officers thus superseded at the time they would have obtained such promotion had not a reduction in the Army taken place.

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* No. 1 Dock was not completed until 12th March, 1906.

† Includes "Assistance" in dock for eight months.

MR. HALDANE: Cases of disbandment in any branch of the service must necessarily cause retardation of promotion throughout the branch, and it is expedient to consider the interests of the infantry officers as a body rather than those of any particular regiment. Every effort has been made to avoid hardship. The measures which are suggested in the Question are, I fear, impracticable.

Costs of Court of Inquiry.

MR. LEA (St. Pancras, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the legal expenses incurred by Colonel Cavendish, Major Corkran, and Major Hardy, in the recent court of inquiry held at Chelsea Barracks, were paid for by the public; and, if so, what was the amount so paid, and on whose authority were the payments made.

MR. HALDANE: The legal expenses of these officers are being paid by the public from Army Votes. The payments are made on the authority of the Army Council and with the sanction of the Treasury. The amount was £491 6s.

MR. LEA inquired why this sanction was given by the Army Council, having regard to the fact that Lieutenant Wood was told by the military authorities that expenses would not be charged to public funds.

MR. HALDANE: So far as Lieutenant Wood was concerned, no doubt that was so; but in regard to these officers, Lieutenant Wood brought a charge of something like conspiracy against them, and in a most improper letter charges were set out, against which these officers had to defend themselves, and the Army Council and the Treasury took the view, in which, I think, public opinion will support them, that these officers should not be subjected to the expenses, in view of the fact that the charges were not proved.

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD (Somersetshire, Wellington): Will there be a Supplementary Estimate?

MR. HALDANE: No, I think not.

Guns for the Territorial Army.

MR. GUINNESS (Bury St. Edmunds): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War how many guns it is proposed to supply for the use of the Territorial Army during the coming financial year.

MR. HALDANE: It is proposed to supply to the Territorial Forces by the end of the coming financial year 536 15-pounder field guns. These guns will all be mounted upon quick-firing carriages, and are the total number required for the field batteries of the Territorial Force. Fifty-six 4·7 guns are also ready for issue to arm the fourteen heavy batteries. The issue of howitzers cannot be completed until the rearmament of the regular batteries takes place, but sufficient will be issued to enable training to proceed.

MR. BELLOC (Salford, S.): Are the 15-pounders of the new quick-firing type?

MR. HALDANE said that they were converted 15-pounder guns.

MR. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham) asked as to the modern quick-firing guns, were any of them to be supplied to the Territorial Force.

MR. HALDANE: No, the 18-pounder guns are being reserved for the Regular Forces, and are heavier than the field guns supplied to the Territorial Force.

MR. GUINNESS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what progress has been made with the conversion of 15-pounder field guns for the use of the Territorial Army; what is the cost per battery of such conversion; whether the limbers and wagons are being simultaneously converted so as to enable them to carry fixed ammunition; and how many wagons per battery it is proposed to allot.

MR. HALDANE: The conversion of the 15-pounder field guns is proceeding rapidly. The first batch of 150 guns are at present undergoing conversion and some will be ready for issue immediately. The rest will follow. The cost will be about £1,200 per battery. The ammunition for the guns will not be fixed ammunition, *i.e.* ammunition in which the shell and cartridge are in one piece, and therefore the necessity for converting the limbers and wagons simultaneously will not arise. The number of wagons to be allotted per battery is still under consideration.

MR. GUINNESS inquired what was the range of the converted guns as compared with the new quick-firing guns for the Regular Forces.

MR. HALDANE said he had stated once or twice, and he stated again, that the mere distance the shells travelled was about the same, but the lighter projectile had a less effective range than the heavier one, the resistance of the air operating more rapidly, and consequently there was a difference of 1,000 yards in the effective range, the shrapnel bullets giving a higher degree of momentum.

MR. ARTHUR LEE asked if the Army Council had advised the arming of the Territorial Force with a less efficient weapon as compared with that issued to the Regular Army.

MR. HALDANE said the General Staff were of opinion that it was a useful efficient weapon for the work the Territorial Army would have to do.

War Office Information—Ashburton Division Election.

MR. HILLS (Durham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that a telegram was sent to the agent of the Liberal candidate for the Ashburton division of Devon, dated from the War Office, 9th January, 5.24 p.m., and signed Geake, giving official figures of the numbers of men employed at Woolwich Arsenal; whether Mr. Geake is an official of the War Office, and, if so, what *status* he holds; and whether instructions will be given so as to prevent in future the interference of a public Department on behalf of candidates for election to this House.

MR. HALDANE: I very much regret that there should have been any misunderstanding about this question, and I am anxious to make it clear that the War Office, so far as it gives information which is available for the public, does so apart from all question as to whether it is applied for by gentlemen connected with one side of the House or the other. I think I shall be able to show that if there has been any misunderstanding, it has been a very small one. The telegram was not official. Mr. Geake is not an official of the War Office, but someone telegraphed to him, asking him to obtain the information, and he came down to the War Office to inquire. I was in Scotland at the time, but he saw my private secretary, who referred him, in the ordinary course, to the department in which the information could be obtained. He despatched the telegram from the postal room at the War Office, the charge being prepaid. I understand that at the time the clerk in charge had not got the exact figures, so Mr. Geake drew up the telegram in his own name, he prepaid the sixpence, and left it to be sent, when the figures had been obtained, and it was sent by the official. Unfortunately he took the not unnatural course of sending the telegram through the telegraph office in the same building, instead of sending somebody outside with it to the public office. A slip was made in allowing the telegram to go through this channel, and instructions have been given that this must not be done in future. I might repeat that the information given to him was in no way confidential and was available to any inquirer, and I may again say that so long as things are carried on as they have been for some time at the War Office, information will be available to anybody who is able to put a legitimate inquiry asking for it.

Cost of the Territorial Force.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if the promised annual economy of £1,600,000 in the administration of the Territorial Force compared to the superseded Auxiliary Forces is likely to be realised.

MR. HALDANE: I have difficulty in following the comparison made by the hon. and gallant Member. The figure of £1,600,000 is presumably obtained by comparing the estimate of the cost of the Territorial Force shown in Cd. 3296 of last session presented in January, 1907, with the cost of the Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers as there shown. The hon. and gallant Member is doubtless aware that the Militia will not now join the Territorial Force. This comparison consequently no longer holds.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: Do I understand that there will be no economy whatever in the cost of the Territorial Force?

MR. HALDANE: No, certainly not. On the contrary, as the hon. Member knows, if the Territorial Force is to be made thoroughly efficient, it will cost more. We are trying to make a real force of it and to provide real machinery, and that means expenditure.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: Will the right hon. Gentleman refer to the many speeches he made in this House in which he spoke of the greatly reduced expenditure?

MR. HALDANE: I have always said that the Territorial Force, if it is to be a reality, meant more in actual cost, and I have put Estimates before Parliament which I think will be found to confirm that.

Indo-Chinese Opium Trade.

CAPTAIN CRAIG (Down, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India what steps the Government have taken to give effect to the unanimous vote of the House of Commons on 30th May, 1906, that the Indo-Chinese opium trade is morally indefensible, and requesting His Majesty's Government to take such steps as may be necessary for bringing it to a speedy close.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. MORLEY, Montrose Burghs): On the 29th July last in reply to a Question in this House I explained the proposals which His Majesty's Government had communicated to the Chinese Government for carrying out, in co-operation with that Government, the policy of restriction. I am glad to say that the Chinese Government have accepted with expressions of gratitude our scheme for a progressive reduction of the export of opium from India. Papers on the subject will be laid by my right hon. friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in the course of a few days.

Labour Regulations in the New Hebrides.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what are the present prescribed conditions agreed to by the French Government in relation to adult and child labour, male and female, in the New Hebrides.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): The instructions of the French Government to the French High Commissioner on the subject of native labour in the New Hebrides are contained in the third enclosure to M. Geoffray's note of 29th August last, which appears in the Parliamentary Paper being published to-day.

British Indians in the Transvaal.

SIR H. COTTON (Nottinghamshire, E.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can state the number of British Indians in the Transvaal who had submitted themselves for registration under the Asiatic Law Amendment (Registration) Act up to 31st December, 1907.

MR. CHURCHILL: I would refer the hon. Member to page 61 of Cd. 3887 showing that 409 applications to register had been received up to 11th November. No later figures have been received.

SIR H. COTTON: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can state the number of British Indians who are known to have entered the Transvaal without a permit, or with permits alleged to be false, during the years 1906 and 1907.

MR. CHURCHILL: The information on this subject in the possession of His Majesty's Government is included in the Blue-book, Cd. 3887, pages 14–21. In a speech of the Colonial Secretary of the Transvaal at Pretoria on 4th January, it is stated that during the last five years there have been 1,500 prosecutions of Indians for the offences mentioned by the hon. Member.

Nyassaland Governor's Council.

*MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies when non-official members will be appointed to the Council of the Governor of Nyassaland.

MR. CHURCHILL: The unofficial members of the Legislative Council of Nyassaland will be appointed on the return of the Governor, who leaves England about the middle of February.

*MR. REES: I regret I did not catch the Answer. Do I understand the appointments will not be made till the return of the Governor?

MR. CHURCHILL: Yes.

Northern Nigerian Railway.

MR. WEDGWOOD (Newcastle-under-Lyme): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether a zone two miles wide along the Northern Nigerian Railway has been declared State property; and, if so, whether it is intended to alienate this land permanently or on temporary leases at periodically revised rents.

MR. CHURCHILL: The attention of the High Commissioner was called some time ago to the importance of securing to the State the enhanced value of the land through which the railway will pass. He has not yet reported what has actually been done, but he is now on his way to England, and will be consulted on his arrival. Steps have been taken to safeguard public interests in this matter.

Public Land in the Federated Malay States.

MR. WEDGWOOD: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been drawn to the alienation of 1,231,157 acres of public land in the Federated Malay States up to the end of the year 1906; whether land so alienated is put up to public auction or sold privately; if put up to public auction what notice is given of such sale, and is a reasonable reserve price put upon the land; and will he consider the advisability of stopping the permanent alienation of public land and minerals.

MR. CHURCHILL: The hon. Member's figures are correct. There has been great demand for land for the purpose of planting rubber. Land may be alienated with or without auction, but mining land is almost invariably put up to auction. In such cases a reserve price is fixed by the Resident. I do not know what notice is given of a sale by auction, but the Residents may be trusted to see that sufficient notice is given to secure the necessary competition. Agricultural land is not, as a rule, sold by auction but is granted in return for the payment of a premium, which is fixed according to the class of land, and for an annual quit rent which may be periodically revised at intervals of thirty years. Mining land is granted on lease for a term of years and not in perpetuity. For further details I would refer the hon. Member to the land and mining enactments of the Federated Malay States, which will be found in the Library of this House. The Secretary of State sees no reason at present for altering a system which is understood to work well and has attracted much-needed capital to the Federated Malay States.

Malagasy Labour in the Transvaal Mines.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether His Majesty's Government has information with regard to any negotiations between the Governments of Madagascar and the Transvaal for the provision of Malagasy labour for the Transvaal mines; and whether he will lay Papers on the subject.

MR. CHURCHILL: The Transvaal Government has inquired of the Secretary of State whether the French Government would be prepared to sanction the recruitment of native labour in Madagascar, and in reply the Transvaal Government is being invited to give particulars as to the proposed terms of recruitment.

Native Affairs Commission in Natal.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether he can inform the House if action has been taken, or is about to be taken, in Natal on the unanimous recommendations of the Native Affairs Commission contained in the Report laid before Parliament, and in particular with regard to the abolition of compulsory labour, the desirability of open inquiry or trial where deprivation of rights may be intended, adequate means for acquainting natives with contemplated legislation, the improvement of police methods and avoidance of unnecessary arrest and handcuffing of kraal-heads, compensation to native missions, and reconsideration of the action of the Native Trust in dismantling places of worship.

MR. CHURCHILL: I cannot give precise information, but ministers have stated that they intend to carry out certain administrative recommendations of the Commission, and that they in part have done so. They have also given an assurance to the Parliament of the Colony that they will introduce legislation to implement as far as is possible the proposals of the Commission, but they state that they cannot deal with the Report as applying to the whole Colony pending a settlement of the matters averred to be a cause of unrest in Zululand.

British Civil Servants in the Transvaal.

MR. LYTTELTON (St. George's, Hanover Square): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, how many British civil servants have been reduced since the grant of responsible Government to the Transvaal; and whether, having regard to the public assurances given by Sir A. Lawley and Sir R. Solomon, any and what steps have been taken by His Majesty's Government to secure to them any consideration for their loss of employment.

MR. CHURCHILL: The right hon. Gentleman's Question is not quite clear in its terms. He speaks of British Civil Servants, of which there were only three, and suitable employment has been found for them. If he means Transvaal Civil Servants of British birth, I fear I cannot answer the Question, as I cannot distinguish them in that way. The Civil Service was notoriously overstaffed, and many retrenchments have taken place on the authority of a Royal Commission, both in the period of Crown Colony Government and under Responsible Government. I would desire to say that the Secretary of State is anxious to find places here and in the Colonies for well qualified men, and that some have already been provided for.

MR. LYTTELTON: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that, in 1899, Major McInerney, being then a barrister in active practice in Melbourne, left his professional duties to serve as an officer in the Victorian contingent in the Boer War, and was seriously wounded in that service; that he was afterwards appointed chief magistrate of the Court of Pretoria under martial law, resident magistrate of Krugersdorp under the civil administration, on the terms, as promised by Sir Richard Solomon, that pension rights would be attached to the office; that he was seconded to act as chairman of the Central Judicial Commission, and charged with the heavy and responsible duty of inquiring into and adjudicating upon the claims for compensation for war damage and on military receipts, and after completion of that task resumed his office as resident magistrate; that he was retired from the service of the Transvaal Government in September, 1907, without pension; and whether, in view of the recorded testimony to the value of his services by Lord Milner and Lord Selborne, and to the pledges made by the representatives of the King in the Transvaal, His Majesty's Government have taken any, and what, steps to secure the fulfilment of those pledges in respect of Major McInerney's eight years of strenuous and able service to the Crown.

MR. CHURCHILL: The facts are I believe generally as stated in the Question, though I cannot agree that any promise of pension was made to Major McInerney which in the absence of a general pension law could confer any special rights upon him; nor is there anything which materially differentiates his case from that of many other public officers in the Transvaal who were retrenched at the time when the right hon. Member was himself holding the seal of office as Secretary of State for the Colonies. The Secretary of State fully appreciated the value of the services which Major McInerney rendered in South Africa and was glad recently to have an opportunity of recognising those services by submitting his name to His Majesty for an honour, but he is not prepared to press his claims on the Transvaal Government.

MR. LYTTELTON: Is this a typical case of the reductions which have taken place?

MR. CHURCHILL: I am advised there are no circumstances differentiating this case from those of other persons with respect to the claim for pensions.

Sir Harry Maclean.

MR. MACLEAN (Bath): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can give any information as to the prospects of the immediate release of Sir Harry Maclean from captivity in Morocco.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. RUNCIMAN, Dewsbury, for Sir EDWARD GREY): We have just received a telegram from our representative at Tangier stating that Raisuli has informed him that he will bring in Kaid Maclean this evening.

Congo Free State.

MR. ALDEN (Middlesex, Tottenham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether any representations whatever have been made to the Belgian Government with regard to the proposed annexation of the Congo Free State; and, if so, whether he can inform the House as to the attitude taken up by His Majesty's Government.

MR. RUNCIMAN: The Belgian Parliament having not yet decided what terms as regards the Congo Free State shall be submitted as to the transfer of the State, the time has not yet come, in the opinion of His Majesty's Government, for any formal representations as to the conditions which they consider should prevail in the Congo State after the transfer has been made. Both the Belgian and the Congolese Governments are, however, well aware of the views held by His Majesty's Government upon this point.

Shanghai Opium Dens.

SIR H. COTTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether he is aware that, in accordance with the Chinese opium edict, all opium dens in the Native city of Shanghai, to the number of 700, have been closed, and that no steps have been taken to close 1,600 opium dens in the international settlement which is under the control of the Shanghai Municipal Council; and whether His Majesty's Government will adopt measures to ensure that the anti-opium campaign in China is not discouraged and thwarted by the reluctance of the municipal council to co-operate with the Chinese authorities.

MR. RUNCIMAN: The facts as regards the closing of the opium saloons in the Native city at Shanghai and their retention in the International Settlement are as stated in the Question. The Municipal Council are responsible to the ratepayers of the Settlement, and are not under the control of His Majesty's Government. The Council have decided not to issue any further licenses, but it is understood that they do not consider they would be justified in doing more pending reference to the ratepayers at their annual meeting, which takes place in March next. His Majesty's Government will use all the influence in their power to ensure that *bona fide* efforts on the part of the Chinese authorities to diminish the opium habit in China are not thwarted but encouraged.

Persian Petroleum Concession.

Mr. BOWLES (Lambeth, Norwood): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that Indian troops have been despatched into Persian territory for the purpose of protecting a petroleum concession granted to a British subject; whether this step has been taken with the consent of the Persian Government and with that of the Turkish and Russian Governments, parties to the frontier Treaty between Turkey and Persia; whether it is intended to reinforce the Indian troops in question; and whether the expenses of their despatch into Persian territory will be defrayed by Persia, by the Government of India, by this country, or by the British concessionaire.

Mr. RUNCIMAN: The consular escort at Ahwaz has been temporarily reinforced by twenty men and two officers. This step has been rendered necessary by the disturbed state of the district, and the possible danger in consequence to the consular staff and the British employees of the Oil Syndicate. It is not a matter which affects the frontier Treaty referred to or the Governments who are parties to it. No objection has been raised by the Persian Government or any one else to a step which was taken solely to protect British persons and property. There is no intention of reinforcing the troops in question. The expenses of their despatch into Persian territory are being shared by British and Indian funds.

The Disturbances in Morocco.

Mr. PIKE PEASE (Darlington): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he can give an estimate of the amount of damage caused to British property at Casablanca and other towns in Morocco.

Mr. RUNCIMAN: My right hon. friend has not sufficient information to enable him to give even an approximate estimate of the damage done at Casablanca. It would in any case be undesirable to do so, as it will be the duty of the International Commission which is to meet at that port to assess the amount of the damage. As far as my right hon. friend is aware no damage has recently been caused to British property at any other town in Morocco.

Russo-Japanese War—British Shipping Claims.

Mr. PIKE PEASE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if there are any outstanding cases with regard to compensation for damage or loss incurred by British ships during the Russo-Japanese War.

Mr. RUNCIMAN: My right hon. friend regrets to state that most of these cases are still outstanding. Though His Majesty's Government have repeatedly called attention to the case of the "Knight Commander," and pressed for a reply to their proposal that the matter should be referred to arbitration, no answer has—down to the present time—been received from the Russian Government. His Majesty's Government are also awaiting replies to communications they have addressed to the Imperial Government in regard to the case of the "Calchas," and the claims arising in connection with the detention of the Peninsular and Oriental Steamer "Malacca" in the Red Sea. The cases of the "Hipsang," "St. Kilda," "Ikhona," and "Oldhamia" are still pending in various stages, before the Russian Prize Courts.

Mr. BELLOC: Do I understand our Government is pressing for compensation or damages in the case of the "Malacca"?

Mr. RUNCIMAN: No Sir. What our Government has done is to put forward the claims which have been made in respect of the detention of the "Malacca" in the Red Sea.

Irish Council Bill.

Captain CRAIG: I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether it is the Government's intention to re-introduce an Irish Council Bill this session.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Asquith, Fifeshire, E.): No, Sir.

Blocking Motions.

LORD R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.): I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether he intends to propose the promised Amendment to the Standing Orders dealing with anticipatory Motions.

SIR CHARLES McLAREN (Leicestershire, Boswell): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps the Government propose to carry out the recommendations of the Committee appointed last session to consider the subject of blocking Notices of Motions given in this House.

MR. ASQUITH: The Amendments to the Standing Orders will be placed on the Paper immediately, and they can be moved at any time that we can be assured that they can pass as unopposed Resolutions.

MR. LEIF JONES (Westmorland, Appleby): Are hon. Members to be left entirely at the mercy of the proposed Amendments being made without opposition in the House?

MR. ASQUITH: The Prime Minister said—and, I think, I said—we were prepared only to move these Amendments if they obtained general consent.

MR. LEIF JONES: Cannot the Government give some help to private Members who ballot a Motion in the hope of getting debate on the subject?

MR. ASQUITH: Hon. Members can take that course if they like.

LORD R. CECIL: Does the right hon. Gentleman mean that the Government will not move the Resolutions unless they are absolutely unopposed?

MR. ASQUITH: Unless they are substantially unopposed.

Children in Liverpool Public Houses.

MR. WEDGWOOD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the statement of the Chief Constable of Liverpool, given in Cd. 3813, that the action of the Liverpool Licensing Bench in discountenancing the presence of children in public houses is responsible for the fact that the children observed to be taken into public houses in Liverpool amounted to only 1·25 per public house per hour against 9·12 in London; and whether the same method of checking this evil can be recommended by the Home Office to other licensing benches.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL, Yorkshire, Cleveland): The Secretary of State does not find that the Chief-Constable of Liverpool committed himself to so definite a statement as my hon. friend attributes to him; but there can be no doubt that the views of a licensing authority on the question of the admission of women and children into public houses must have a strong influence on the license-holders within their district. The Secretary of State has no power to advise licensing authorities in this matter; but he is sure that they must all be fully alive to a question which is so much in the public mind at the moment, and which will be dealt with in coming legislation.

Sunday Police Duty in the Metropolis.

MR. SEAVERNS (Lambeth, Brixton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department it his attention has been called to the fact that, under new regulations framed by the Commissioner of Police, members of the Metropolitan Police force have to perform point duty for eight consecutive hours on Sunday, without an interval for rest or refreshment; and will he arrange that an interval of at least half an hour for these purposes be allowed them.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: The alteration in the hours of duty which my hon. friend mentions affects a limited of stations and was made by the Commissioner for the convenience of the men. The Commissioner may be trusted to so arrange that the constables referred to have proper opportunities for taking necessary refreshment.

The Imprisoned Woman Suffragists.

MR. BRODIE (Surrey, Reigate): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that certain ladies recently imprisoned for making political demonstrations have been placed in the second division in Holloway Prison, and are being treated as ordinary criminals; whether this is contrary to the accepted practice of treating political offenders as first-class misdemeanants; and whether he can arrange that they should be treated in the same way as ladies imprisoned for similar demonstrations in 1906.

*Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL: My hon. friend is mistaken in thinking that these ladies are being treated as ordinary criminals. The second division of prisoners was established for the purpose of separating from ordinary prisoners of the third-class persons of previously good character convicted of minor offences. Whether a prisoner should be placed in the first, second or third class is a matter in the discretion of the magistrate. The ladies referred to in the hon. Member's Question have committed offences against the ordinary law, and the Secretary of State sees no reason to interfere with the magistrate's decision that they should be treated in the second division.

Extinction of Licences.

Mr. GIBBS (Bristol, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will state the total number of licences for the sale of intoxicating liquor which have been extinguished under the provisions of the Act of 1904; and whether he will give the average annual net reduction in the number of on-licences, for a period of ten years before the Act of 1904 came into operation, and the average annual net reduction in the number of the same class of licences which has been subsequently effected under that Act.

*Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL: The hon. Member will find the information he desires in the Annual Volumes of Licensing Statistics. The compilation of the volume for 1907 is not yet complete, but the Secretary of State can give the following figures as approximately correct. In the three years 1905–6–7, the renewal of about 3,332 on-licences was refused subject to compensation under the Act of 1904, but a certain number of these await the payment which will actually extinguish them. The total number paid for and extinguished before 31st December last, is about 2,669, showing an average annual reduction of 889 licences under the Act of 1904. In addition, there was an annual average reduction without compensation of 418 licences—due to various causes. After deducting the average number of new licences granted (fifty-five) the net average annual reduction for the three years is about 1,250, as compared with an average of 386 for the period of ten years before the Act of 1904 came into operation.

Mr. CHARLES ROBERTS (Lincoln): Does not this represent a reduction of one and a half licences for each licensing district in England and Wales?

*Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL: Will the hon. Member please give notice of that Question?

Lighthouse Administration.

Mr. W. R. REA (Scarborough): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is yet in a position to state when the Report of the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the lighthouse administration of the United Kingdom will be laid upon the Table of the House.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Lloyd-George, Carnarvon Boroughs): I am informed that the Royal Commission have made their Report, which has been submitted to the King. It will, no doubt, be laid on the Table in the course of a few days.

Port of London New Stock.

Mr. WOOD: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he has received an answer from the London County Council to his inquiry, whether the Council is willing to assist the proposed Port of London authority by giving its guarantee to the new stock, as recommended by the Royal Commission on the Port of London, and proposed in the Bill of the late Government.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: Yes, Sir. But though I emphasised the importance of the Board of Trade's knowing the attitude and intentions of the London County Council while preparing their Bill, I do not gather from the reply I received that the matter has been discussed by the Council. That reply informed me that the Rivers Committee were unable to recommend the Council to come to any decision, until they knew the main lines on which the Government intend to deal with the matter, but that some of their members would be glad to confer with me on the whole subject. I shall, of course, gladly avail myself of this offer, and I am already in personal touch with the Chairman of the Council, and of the Rivers Committee. I am, however, quite without any official information as to the views of the Council as a whole.

Local Loans.

MR. HART-DAVIES (Hackney, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if the Board allows corporations and other local authorities to vary subsequently the conditions on which loans have been raised in the public market by such authorities; and, if so, under what Act.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): The Local Government Board would not sanction any arrangement that would have the effect of varying the conditions on which a loan had been raised by a local authority unless the variation was made with the consent of the lender.

Unemployed Relief Works.

MR. ALDEN: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he can state the number of men at present on relief works in connection with distress committees in different parts of the country, and the total amount granted out of the funds at his disposal; whether he can also state the number of men engaged upon relief works at the Alexandra Palace, together with the amount granted up to the present date; and whether he entertains any hope of being able to make further grants for this work in the near future; and, if so, upon what conditions.

MR. JOHN BURNS: The latest information at my disposal shows that in the week ended 25th January there were 4,075 persons for whom employment was provided by distress committees outside London upon work which was undertaken by the distress committees or to the cost of which they were contributing. The number for whom employment was provided by the Central (Unemployed) Body for London on Friday last was 1,724. The amount which up to the present time I have advanced out of the Parliamentary grant is £62,747. This is of course exclusive of any payments made in Scotland and Ireland by the Local Government Boards for those countries. There were 175 men employed by the Central Body at work in the grounds of the Alexandra Palace on Friday, and the number was to be increased to 200 to-day, whilst to-morrow thirty men will be set to work on the building. The payments out of the grant in respect of work at the palace amount to £8,403. I do not contemplate making any further payments for this purpose.

The Small Holdings Act, 1907.

MR. FORSTER-BOULTON (Huntingdonshire, Ramsey): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if his attention has been called to the fact that certain county councils have interpreted the Small Holdings Act, 1907, and the Acts incorporated in it, in such a manner that the capital sum expended on the purchase of land must not exceed an amount the interest of which can be met by a penny rate, notwithstanding that the land purchased is let for a rent equal to, or greater than, the interest on the capital expended, the rates, taxes, and expenses of management; and if he will consider it advisable to issue a fresh circular to county councils giving instruction on this subject.

MR. JOHN BURNS: My attention has been called to this matter. The Law Officers of the Crown advised in 1893 that, in considering whether the limit prescribed by Sub-section (2) of Section 18 of the Small Holdings Act, 1892, was likely to be exceeded, a county council might have regard to any receipts which might reasonably be expected to come into account during the year and to be available in reduction of the expenses incurred under the Act, and it is now made clear by Section 8 of the Act of last session that this view of the law is correct. I will consider the suggestion that a circular should be issued on the subject.

Elementary Schools Building Grant.

MR. BRIDGEMAN (Shropshire, Oswestry): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education if he will state how the £100,000 included in the Appropriation Bill of 1907 for the purpose of building elementary schools has been allocated; and what rules or considerations have governed the allocation of the grants.

LORD R. CECIL: At the same time may I ask the President of the Board of Education what steps have been taken towards the allotment of the grant of £100,000 for school building; whether it is proposed to make any grants in Wales; and, if so, in what parishes.

MR. PIKE PEASE: I beg also to ask the President of the Board of Education if he will give a list of the townships in which new elementary schools are to be erected with the assistance of the grant of £100,000 sanctioned in the Appropriation Act of 1907.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): The distribution of these grants is governed by regulations laid before Parliament last session. A considerable number of applications, both from England and Wales, have been received, but until the preliminary inquiries have been completed I am not in a position to state the cases in which a grant will be made. A statement will, however, be presented to the House as soon as the outstanding applications have all been decided.

LORD R. CECIL: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it is the intention to hold a public inquiry in each case before a grant is made?

MR. MCKENNA: Oh, no.

LORD R. CECIL: Does the right hon. Gentleman mean departmental inquiries?

MR. MCKENNA: Departmental inquiries.

MR. PIKE PEASE: When does he think a statement will probably be made?

MR. MCKENNA: Probably it will be ready some time next month, but not, I think, until then.

MR. BOWLES: No statement will be made until the money has been allocated?

MR. MCKENNA: The money will be allocated in accordance with the regulations. When the money has been allocated a statement will be made. It could not be made until the money has been allocated.

LORD R. CECIL: Would it not be possible for the right hon. Gentleman to make a statement before the end of next month as to the sums the Department had already determined to allocate?

MR. MCKENNA: No, I will make a complete statement as soon as the money has been allocated.

Corporal Punishment in the Manchester Grammar School.

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON (Northumberland, Tyneside): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether, in view of the evidence of public feeling having been aroused in consequence of the protests of certain members of the Manchester City Council, the parent, and others in March last, against the stripping and birching of a boy at the Manchester Grammar School, he will issue an order prohibiting the stripping of boys without consent of the parents, for the purpose of inflicting corporal punishment, in all schools receiving grants from public funds derived from taxation.

MR. MCKENNA: The Board of Education require to be satisfied that a school receiving grants from public funds is properly conducted, and might insist on the alteration of a system of discipline of which they disapproved. But I do not think the case to which the hon. Member refers is one in which the Board should interfere with the discretion of the Governing Body and the headmaster, and it does not appear to me expedient to lay down a general rule on the subject.

Small Holdings.

Mr. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether the attention of the Board of Agriculture has been called to the fact that circulars have been issued by some county and parish councils inviting applications for small holdings and allotments under the limited provisions of the Act of 1892, which require the purchase of the land by the small holder, and ignoring the provisions for leasing land under the Act of 1907; and whether, in view of the discouraging effect which this may have on many would-be applicants, the Board will take steps to advise the councils to advertise the whole of the opportunities available under the new Act of 1907.

The TREASURER of the HOUSEHOLD (Sir E. Strachey, Somersetshire, S.): Our attention has been directed to one instance in which circulars have been issued by a parish council which is open to the objection to which my hon. friend refers, and we are in communication with the county council respecting it. So far as our information goes the case is an exceptional one, but if others come under our notice we shall be glad to give effect to the suggestion of my hon. friend.

Dutch Skim Milk Cheese.

Mr. A. L. STANLEY (Cheshire, Eddisbury): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that Dutch skim-milk cheese is being imported into and sold in this country under the name of Dutch Cheshire cheese; and whether he can take any steps to prevent the buying public being imposed on by such a description.

Sir EDWARD STRACHEY: We have for some time past been making inquiry into this matter, but up to the present we have not obtained any definite information that any offence under the Merchandise Marks Acts has been committed. The matter will continue to receive attention, and proceedings will at once be instituted if the necessary evidence of any infringement of the law is forthcoming.

Crown Prosecutions—Druce Perjury Case.

Mr. MACLEAN: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General, whether, in view of the facts disclosed in the recent Druce perjury prosecution, he will consider the advisability of devising such means as will in the future prevent the use of the name of the Crown in criminal courts for private ends as distinguished from the vindication of public justice.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir W. Robson, South Shields): I think it is highly undesirable we should take away from private persons the right to apply for criminal process. To do so would involve a complete change in our system and would throw great additional expense on the taxpayer. It seems to me desirable that all criminal proceedings, being, as they are, in respect of alleged offences against the State, should be in the name of the Crown. With regard to preventing the abuse of this criminal procedure, reliance is placed by us upon the vigilance of the magistrates and on the penalties attached to malicious prosecution and perjury. I should be glad to consider any further means my hon. friend may suggest having the same end in view.

Mail Robberies in Ireland.

Captain CRAIG: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General how many cases of robbery and attempted robbery of His Majesty's mails in Ireland were reported to the police during the past thirteen months; how many arrests were made; and in how many cases were the perpetrators convicted.

The CHIEF SECRETARY to the LORD-LIEUTENANT of IRELAND (Mr. Birrell, Bristol, N.): My right hon. friend has asked me to answer this.

Seven such cases have been reported during the past thirteen months. In none of these were any arrests made or prosecutions instituted.

The "Ulster Guardian."

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture for Ireland, how long the advertisements of the Department have been inserted in the *Ulster Guardian*; and what amount has been paid or is owing to this paper to 31st December, 1907, for such advertisements.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR IRELAND (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): The date is August 3rd, 1907; the amount, £12 11s. 6d.

MR. T. L. CORBETT: Has the hon. Gentleman any financial interest direct or indirect in the paper?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: None whatever.

MR. T. L. CORBETT: Has the hon. Gentleman ever seen a list of shareholders in the paper which includes his wife's name?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I adhere to my Answer.

Disturbed State in Ireland—Outrages in Galway.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the disturbed state of the district of Gort, county Galway; whether he will state the number of outrages reported from this district during the past twelve months, specifying the number of cases of firing at and wounding the person, firing into dwelling houses, and incendiary fires, respectively; whether during the last three months the outrages have been more numerous than at any previous period; and whether he will explain why no adequate measures have been taken to deal with this disorder.

MR. BIRRELL: The number of serious offences reported as having occurred in the constabulary district of Gort during the twelve months ending 31st January, 1908, is forty-one, which includes two cases of firing at and wounding, fourteen cases of firing into dwellings, and five cases of incendiary fire. Of the forty-one cases, ten occurred in the three months last past, eighteen in the preceding three months, and six and seven respectively in the two earlier periods of three months. The normal police force of the district consists of thirty-eight men. In August last an extra force of eleven men was sent to the district, and during the past month the force has been further strengthened by the addition of forty-four men.

MR. DUFFY (Galway, S.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware of the fact that the agent on this property in the course of the last few weeks was fined for assaulting a tenant in the rent office, and that on the evening of 22nd January the same agent fired several shots at the people, to their fear and terror? Are these outrages included in the list?

MR. BIRRELL: I hope they are.

Doorns Outrage.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a report of the shooting of Mr. Patrick Ryan, a national school teacher, at Doorns, East Clare, on 23rd January; whether he has any information as to the reason for the outrage; and whether any arrests have been made.

MR. BIRRELL: The reply to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative. It would be contrary to practice to state the opinion, if any, of the police as to the motive for an offence. The police have not yet succeeded in obtaining evidence which would justify them in making an arrest.

Wicklow Outrage.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether it has been reported to him that at Summerhill, Wicklow, on the night of 25th January, two officers of the constabulary were shot while standing beneath a street lamp; and whether any persons have been arrested.

Mr. BIRRELL: The facts are as stated in the Question. Five persons have been arrested and are now on remand.

Carrowbane Outrage.

Mr. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on Sunday night, 26th January, shots were fired outside the house of Mr. Cooney, a farmer at Carrowbane, near Gort, with an intimidatory purpose; whether this farmer has been previously molested, and on what grounds; and whether any action has been taken in reference to the matter.

Mr. BIRRELL: The facts are as stated in the first part of the Question. In the month of December last part of a boundary fence on Mr. Cooney's farm was injured. The police have made full inquiries in the matter, but so far have not succeeded in bringing the offender to justice.

Dromindoora Outrage.

Mr. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a report of a shooting outrage at the house of a farmer, named Macnamara, at Dromindoora, East Clare; and whether the police have taken any action in the matter.

Mr. BIRRELL: The police have reported that John Macnamara's house was fired into on the 1st and again on the 6th January, the circumstances on each occasion tending to show that intimidation and not personal injury was intended. The police have taken all possible steps to discover the offenders but without success.

Outrage on Lord Gough's Estate.

Mr. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he has received particulars of an attack with firearms upon men engaged in felling trees on Lord Gough's property, near Gort, on 9th January; and whether any of the assailants were arrested.

Mr. BIRRELL: I have received a report of the offence referred to, which was committed on 8th January. Two men were injured by pellets of shot. The offenders were disguised and the injured persons were unable to identify any of them. No arrests have been made.

Ballinard Outrage.

Mr. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the nature of the outrage committed on 8th January, at the residence of Mrs. Cooper-Chadwick, at Ballinard, Tipperary; whether this lady has been under police protection and, if so, for what reason; and whether the persons who committed this outrage have been discovered.

Mr. BIRRELL: On the evening of 7th January an explosion took place outside Mrs. Cooper-Chadwick's house. It was found that a wheel-box containing powder had been placed at some yards distance from the house and exploded. The distance at which the explosion took place was such that the building was not materially injured. Mrs. Cooper-Chadwick had recently evicted a tenant. At the time of the outrage she was receiving protection by police patrols, and she has since been afforded closer protection. The offenders have not been discovered.

Mr. CULLINAN (Tipperary, S.): Is it not the fact that at the time of the committal of this outrage friendly negotiations were proceeding for the sale of this estate, and have not the tenants and the local bodies condemned it as the work of the outrage-monger?

[No Answer was returned.]

Scariff Outrage.

Mr. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a report that the house of Mr. William Young, D.C., at Scariff, was fired into on the night of 6th January; whether anything is known as to the cause of the outrage; and whether any arrests have been made.

Mr. BIRRELL: Mr. Young's house was fired into on the night of 6th January. No motive for the offence can be assigned by the police. No arrests have been made.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): Can the right hon. Gentleman or his law advisers not devise some means or take some steps whereby some person or persons who must be responsible for those outrages may be brought to justice?

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Take Mr. Craig into consultation.

Mr. J. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): Send for Lord Ashtown.

Edenvale Evicted Tenant.

*Mr. HALPIN (Clare, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Mr. Richard Stackpoole, of Edenvale, Ennis, evicted John Haugh, his wife, and eight young children at Farrihy, two weeks ago; whether he will use his influence with the Estates Commissioners to take action in this case by serving Mr. Stackpoole with notice that they may be able to reinstate this family.

Mr. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners inform me that, having regard to the recent date of the eviction, the case referred to in the Question is not one to which the compulsory powers of the Evicted Tenants Act of last session could be applied. Purchase agreements in respect of the estate referred to have, however, been lodged with the Commissioners, and they will inquire into the matter of the eviction when the estate comes to be dealt with in due course.

*Mr. HALPIN: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it is a fact that at the recent quarter sessions at Kilrush—the capital of West Clare—the County Court Judge was presented with white gloves, and that he complimented the Grand Jury on the peaceable state of the division of this county, and whether harsh evictions like Haugh's may bring disturbances in the divisions?

Ireland and the Licensing Bill.

Mr. BARRIE (Londonderry, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the representations which have been addressed to him, he will endeavour to have Ireland included in the proposed Licensing Bill.

Mr. BIRRELL: Having regard to the differences which exist between the licensing laws of Ireland and those of England, it is not intended to include Ireland in the proposed Licensing Bill of this session. I hope, however, that licensing legislation in respect of Ireland will not be long delayed.

Mr. BARRIE: Did not the Prime Minister tell a deputation in 1906 that Ireland had special claims for inclusion in any temperance legislation?

Mr. BIRRELL: Yes, but the difference in the laws of the two countries makes it almost impossible to combine the reform for the two countries in one Act.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT: Will the right hon. Gentleman give a pledge to introduce temperance legislation for Ireland next year.

Mr. BIRRELL: No, Sir.

Irish Land Purchase.

Mr. BARRIE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he will state the total amount of advances applied for in connection with purchase agreements lodged under the 1903 Land Act, the amount of advances sanctioned to 31st December, 1907, the amount at present available for completing sales, and what further amount is expected to be required by 31st March next.

Mr. BIRRELL: The following are the figures up to 31st December, 1907: In respect of direct sales 135,285 purchase agreements had been lodged representing advances amounting to £49,096,779. Of this sum, the amount of advances sanctioned was £15,991,343, covering 36,319 cases; of which £15,304,844, representing 34,465 cases, had been actually advanced. In addition the Estates Commissioners had agreed to purchase estates comprising 10,135 holdings for £3,343,579, of which £2,857,945, representing 8,569 holdings, had been advanced to vendors. The Congested District Board had agreed to purchase estates comprising 6,966 holdings for £1,208,659, of which £1,142,039 had been advanced in respect of 6,616 holdings. The amount available for advances on 31st January was £86,198. The Estates Commissioners anticipate that a further sum of £1,000,000 will be required before 31st March next.

Irish Police Returns.

MR. DEVLIN (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether, in view of the fact that there is not any statutory or other authority for presenting to the Judges on the Commission in Ireland the returns of crimes and offences, he will consider the advisability of discontinuing the practice of presenting such returns.

MR. BIRRELL: There is no statutory obligation upon the Executive Government to furnish returns of crime to Judges of Assize, but the Judges have the right under their Commission to demand from the responsible peace officers information as to the state of the district. The practice of furnishing the returns in question has existed in Ireland for many years, and it is not intended to discontinue it.

MR. DEVLIN: Does any such practice obtain in Ireland.

MR. BIRRELL: Yes, the Judges there have power to call for such information.

MR. DEVLIN: But is the right hon. Gentleman aware that in Ireland it is done for the purpose of enabling political speeches to be made from the bench?

[No Answer was returned.]

Teaching of Irish in Irish Schools.

MR. KETTLE (Tyrone, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, what was the total amount expended in 1906–7 by way of fees for the teaching of Irish as an ordinary subject in the national schools under the scheme introduced by Mr. Bryce in 1906; what was the scale on which the fees were calculated; and whether the Commissioners of National Education for Ireland have since issued a regulation in contravention of that scheme, and have refused to pay fees for the teaching of Irish as an ordinary subject within school hours.

MR. BIRRELL: The total amount expended by way of fees for the teaching of Irish as an ordinary subject in National Schools in the school year ended 30th June, 1907, was £2124 7s. 4d. The fees paid were at the rate of 1s. per unit of the average attendance at the Irish class in the second and third standards, and at the rate of 2s. 6d. per unit in the fourth and higher standards. Prior to 1906 fees were paid for Irish as an extra subject only. In 1906 fees for all extra subjects, including Irish, were withdrawn and the fees which I have mentioned were sanctioned for Irish taught as an ordinary school subject. The withdrawal of the fees for Irish as an extra subject gave rise to much dissatisfaction in Ireland, and it was therefore decided to restore the system of paying fees for Irish as an extra subject and upon a substantially higher scale. Consequent upon this restoration, payment for Irish as an ordinary subject ceased.

Irish Land Stock.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he is yet in a position to make a statement as to what scheme he proposes to adopt to deal with the cost of the flotation of Irish Land Stock.

MR. ASQUITH: The matter is still under consideration by a Departmental Committee, but I hope to receive their report almost immediately and to be able to make a statement on the subject at an early date.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.): May I ask if the statement which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has promised with regard to the flotation of Irish Land Stock will be made under circumstances which will enable a discussion to take place on it if required.

MR. ASQUITH suggested that that Question should be addressed to the Prime Minister.

A QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL asked the Speaker a Question affecting the privilege of hon. Members. Mr. Ginnell, Member for North Westmeath, was in prison under a sentence of contempt of Court, and he wished to know whether, inasmuch as it was important that hon. Members should be as little as possible obstructed in the discharge of their Parliamentary duties, Mr. Ginnell might have free access to Parliamentary Papers and Reports, and whether he might communicate with the officials of the House in respect of putting down Questions on the Paper, the Questions to be sent to the officials without the supervision of any prison officials reading them. It had always been held, he submitted, in cases of imprisonment for contempt, that the legal right applied only to the detention of the man, and that the greatest privileges should be accorded to him consistent with prison discipline.

*Mr. SPEAKER: The ordinary Papers which are issued to every Member of the House will be issued to the hon. Member for North Westmeath in the usual way. Whether he will be permitted to receive them, or whether he will be entitled to carry on any correspondence is a matter over which I have no control. That must be a matter of prison discipline. If the authorities of the prison in Ireland have no objection to the hon. Member sending Questions to the Table of the House, I have no objection to their appearing on the Paper, provided that it does not presuppose or necessitate the appearance of the hon. Member here. The House has been officially informed that the hon. Member cannot be present in his place for some little time, and therefore it will be carrying things to an absurdity if his name appeared on the Paper and I should be asked to call upon him when it is known that he cannot be here to respond. But in other respects, as far as the Chair is concerned, there is no objection to his enjoying the usual privileges.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL referred to unstarred Questions, and pointed out that personally he had asked several when he had been in Dublin. He thought that the same privilege should be given to Mr. Ginnell. Again, he had seen frequent notices of letters having been addressed to the Speaker from prisoners arrested for contempt of Court. If Mr. Ginnell chose, therefore, to address a letter to the Speaker, he asked that the letter should not pass through the ordinary supervision of the prison officials.

*Mr. SPEAKER: I have no control over the prison officials. If the letter reaches me I shall presume that the officials have passed it; in fact, I have received one letter from the hon. Member.

THE ASSASSINATIONS IN PORTUGAL.

Mr. ASQUITH: I beg to give notice, on behalf of my right hon. friend the Prime Minister, that he will to-morrow move that a humble Address be presented to His Majesty for the purpose of expressing the sentiments of this House on the assassination of His Majesty's ally and friend the King of Portugal and the Algarves and His Royal Highness the Duke of Braganza.

NEW BILLS.

ECCLESIASTICAL DISORDERS BILL.

"To provide for the better enforcement of the Laws relating to public worship and to deal with Ecclesiastical Disorders in the Church of England," presented by Mr. M'Arthur; supported by Mr. Charles Corbett, Mr. Harmood-Banner, Sir George Kekewich, Mr. Thomas Frederick Richards, Mr. Ridsdale, Mr. Watson Rutherford, Mr. Seddon, Mr. Sloan, Mr. Frederick Edwin Smith, Mr. Austin Taylor, and Mr. Luke White; to be read a second time upon Friday, 14th February, and to be printed. [Bill 1.]

SWEATED INDUSTRIES BILL.

"To improve the conditions of employment, including the establishment of a legal minimum wage, of persons employed in certain industries," presented by Mr. Toulmin; supported by Mr. Alden, Mr. Barnes, Mr. Chiozza Money, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Enoch Edwards, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Mr. Russell Rea, Mr. William Redmond, Mr. Shackleton, and Mr. Harold Tennant; to be read a second time upon Friday, 21st February, and to be printed. [Bill 2.]

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

"To enable Women to vote at Parliamentary Elections," presented by Mr. Stanger; supported by Mr. Burt, Mr. James Stuart, Sir Charles M'Laren, Mr. Corrie Grant, Mr. Dickinson, Mr. Hart-Davies, Mr. Gulland, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Mr. Howard, Mr. Lief Jones, and Mr. Snowden; to be read a second time upon Friday, 28th February, and to be printed. [Bill 3.]

EDUCATION (LOCAL AUTHORITIES) BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Local Education Authorities in England and Wales," presented by Mr. Henry Walker; supported by Mr. Acland, Mr. Adkins, Sir Francis Channing, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Gordon Harvey, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Mr. Staveley-Hill, Mr. Massie, Sir Francis Powell, Mr. Verney, and Mr. Winfrey; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th March, and to be printed. [Bill 4.]

UNEMPLOYED WORKMEN BILL.

"To provide work through public authorities for Unemployed Persons; and for other purposes connected therewith," presented by Mr. Whitwell Wilson; supported by Mr. Arthur Henderson, Mr. Enoch Edwards, Mr. Steadman, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, Mr. John Ward, Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Alden, Mr. Chiozza Money, Mr. Branch, Mr. Barnes, and Mr. Nicholls; to be read a second time upon Friday, 13th March, and to be printed. [Bill 5.]

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES (IRELAND) BILL.

"To provide further facilities for the erection of Houses for the Working Classes in cities and towns in Ireland," presented by Mr. Hogan; supported by Mr. John Redmond, Mr. Clancy, Mr. Patrick O'Brien, Mr. Mooney, Mr. William O'Brien, Mr. Dillon, Mr. Nannetti, Mr. Joyce, Mr. Hayden, Mr. William Redmond, Mr. Joseph Devlin, and Mr. T. M. Healy; to be read a second time upon Friday, 20th March, and to be printed. [Bill 6.]

REGISTRATION OF CLUBS (IRELAND) BILL.

"To amend the Law in regard to the Registration of Clubs in Ireland, and for other purposes connected therewith," presented by Mr. Sloan; supported by Mr. Wolff and Mr. Jordan; to be read a second time upon Friday, 27th March, and to be printed. [Bill 7.]

POOR LAW (IRELAND) BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to the relief of destitute Poor in Ireland," presented by Captain Craig; supported by Colonel M'Calmont, Mr. Lonsdale, Mr. Moore, Mr. Thomas Corbett, Mr. Charles Craig, Mr. John Gordon, Mr. Hugh Barrie, and Mr. George Clark; to be read a second time upon Friday, 3rd April, and to be printed. [Bill 8.]

MALICIOUS INJURIES (IRELAND) BILL.

"To deal with the Law relating to compensation for Malicious Injuries in Ireland," presented by Mr. Muldoon; supported by Mr. John Redmond, Mr. Dillon, Mr. Joseph Devlin, and Mr. Cullinan; to be read a second time upon Friday, 10th April, and to be printed. [Bill 9.]

SHOPS BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Shops," presented by Sir Charles Dilke; supported by Mr. Seddon, Mr. Bowerman, Mr. Timothy Davies, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Mr. M'Crae, Mr. Nannetti, Mr. Alfred Scott, Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Tennant, and Mr. Wedgwood; to be read a second time upon Friday, 1st May, and to be printed. [Bill 10.]

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT (1887) REPEAL BILL.

"To repeal The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887," presented by Mr. Haviland-Burke; supported by Captain Donelan, Mr. Joseph Devlin, Mr. William O'Brien, Mr. Hayden, and Mr. Harrington; to be read a second time upon Friday, 8th May, and to be printed. [Bill 11.]

HOUSE LETTING (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To reform the system of House Letting in Scotland," presented by Mr. Murray Macdonald; supported by Mr. Cross, Mr. Cleland, Mr. Barnes, Mr. Charles Price, Mr. Findlay, Mr. Gulland, Mr. M'Callum, Mr. Watt, Mr. Smeaton, Mr. Younger, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr.

Robert Duncan, and Mr. Wilkie; to be read a second time upon Friday, 15th May, and to be printed. [Bill 12.]

ELECTIONS AND REGISTRATION (LONDON) BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Elections and the Registration of Electors in London," presented by Mr. Dickinson; supported by Sir William Collins, Sir Edwin Cornwall, Sir William Cremer, Mr. Bowerman, Mr. Carr-Gomm, Mr. Crooks, Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Pearce, Mr. Bertram Straus, Mr. Waterlow, and Mr. Wiles; to be read a second time upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 13.]

LIQUOR TRAFFIC (LOCAL OPTION) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To empower electors in Scotland to prohibit or limit the sale of Intoxicating Liquors in their respective areas," presented by Mr. Cameron Corbett; supported by Mr. Findlay, Mr. Gulland, Mr. Sutherland, Sir John Jardine, Mr. Barnes, Mr. Crombie, Mr. Wood, Mr. M'Callum, Mr. Ainsworth, and Mr. Eugene Wason; to be read a second time upon Friday, 22nd May, and to be printed. [Bill 14.]

PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Public Rights of Way," presented by Mr. Winfrey; supported by Mr. Henry Walker, Mr. Alexander Cross, Mr. Cheetham, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, and Mr. Higham; to be read a second time upon Friday, 29th May, and to be printed. [Bill 15.]

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

"To limit the Hours of Work below ground in Coal Mines," presented by Mr. Jenkins; supported by Mr. Enoch Edwards, Sir James Jacoby, Mr. Walsh, Mr. Shackleton, Mr. John Williams, Mr. Thomas Richards, Mr. Hodge, Mr. William Abraham (Rhondda), Mr. Wadsworth, and Mr. James Haslam; to be read a second time upon Friday, 5th June, and to be printed. [Bill 16.]

TOWN TENANTS (IRELAND) ACT (1907) AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend The Town Tenants (Ireland) Act, 1907," presented by Captain Donelan; supported by Mr. Field, Mr. William O'Brien, Mr. Devlin, Mr. Joyce, Mr. Mooney, Mr. Augustine Roche, Mr. Patrick O'Brien, and Mr. Gwynn; to be read a second time upon Friday, 20th March, and to be printed. [Bill 17.]

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (DISQUALIFICATION REMOVAL) BILL.

"To remove certain Disqualifications at Parliamentary Elections," presented by Mr. Marnham; supported by Mr. Croydon Marks, Mr. Cowan, and Mr. Brodie; to be read a second time upon Friday, 27th March, and to be printed. [Bill 18.]

EDUCATION (PROVISION OF MEALS) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To enable School Boards in Scotland to provide Meals for school children," presented by Mr. Thomas Frederick Richards; supported by Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Tyson Wilson, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Mr. Barnes, Mr. Wilkie, Mr. Thorne, Mr. M'Crae, Mr. Murray Macdonald, and Mr. Stewart; to be read a second time upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 19.]

COAL MINES (CHECKWEIGHERS) BILL.

"To remove the legal disabilities of Colliery Checkweighers," presented by Sir Walter Foster; supported by Mr. Brace, Mr. Enoch Edwards, Mr. William Harvey, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Mr. William Abraham (Rhondda), Mr. Joseph Walton, Mr. Walsh, Mr. Burt, and Mr. Fenwick; to be read a second time upon Friday, 29th May, and to be printed. [Bill 20.]

ACCESS TO MOUNTAINS BILL.

"To secure to the public the right of access to Mountains and Moorlands," presented by Mr. Trevelyan; supported by Mr. Barnes, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Arthur Dewar, Mr. Schwann, and Mr. Russell, Rea; to be read a second time upon Friday, 15th May, and to be printed. [Bill 21.]

POLICE SUPERANNUATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To amend The Police (Scotland) Act, 1890," presented by Mr. M'Crae; supported by Mr. Cameron Corbett, Mr.

Crombie, Mr. Barnes, Mr. Mitchell-Thomson, Mr. Charles Price, and Mr. Dundas White; to be read a second time upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 22.]

ECCLESIASTICAL ASSESSMENTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To amend the Law regarding Ecclesiastical Assessments in Scotland," presented by Mr. M'Crae; supported by Mr. Crombie, Mr. Eugene Wason, Mr. Munro-Ferguson, Mr. Sutherland, Mr. Gulland, Mr. M'Callum, and Mr. Rainy; to be read a second time upon Friday, 15th May, and to be printed. [Bill 23.]

OPEN SPACES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To facilitate the acquisition of Open Spaces by local authorities in Scotland," presented by Mr. M'Crae; supported by Mr. Mitchell-Thomson, Mr. Crombie, Mr. Younger, Mr. Barnes, Mr. Dalziel, Mr. Gulland, Mr. Dundas White, and Mr. Cleland; to be read a second time upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 24.]

MERCHANDISE MARKS BILL.

"To amend The Merchandise Marks Act, 1887," presented by Sir Howard Vincent; supported by Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Mr. Evelyn Cecil, Mr. Middlemore, Sir Frederick Carne Rasch, Mr. Field, Sir Benjamin Stone, Sir Francis Lowe, and Mr. Parkes; to be read a second time upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 25.]

EXPORTATION OF OLD HORSES BILL.

"To regulate the Exportation of Old Horses, and to diminish cruelty in connection therewith," presented by Sir Howard Vincent; supported by Sir Brampton Gurdon and Sir Frederick Banbury; to be read a second time upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 26.]

FRANCHISE AND REMOVAL OF WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL.

"To establish a single Franchise at all Elections, and thereby to abolish University Representation and to remove the Disabilities of Women," presented by Sir Charles Dilke; supported by Mr. Bell, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Byles, Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. Hodge, Mr. Masterman, Mr. Chiozza Money, Mr. Robert Pearce, Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Sheehan, and Mr. Whitwell Wilson; to be read a second time upon Friday, 28th February, and to be printed. [Bill 27.]

LICENSED PREMISES (ELECTION DAYS) CLOSING BILL.

"To secure the Closing of Licensed Premises on certain Election Days," presented by Mr. Charles Roberts; supported by Colonel Herbert, Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Trevelyan, Mr. Whitwell Wilson, and Dr. Rutherford; to be read a second time upon Friday, 14th February, and to be printed. [Bill 28.]

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK BILL.

"To amend Section 11 of The Savings Banks Act, 1904," presented by Mr. Sydney Buxton; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 29.]

ACCESS TO MOUNTAINS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To secure to the public the right of Access to Mountains and Moorlands in Scotland," presented by Mr. Bryce; supported by Mr. Crombie, Sir John Dewar, Mr. Sutherland, Mr. Arthur Dewar, Mr. Gulland, Mr. John Henderson, Mr. Barnes, Mr. Dundas White, and Mr. Wilkie; to be read a second time upon Friday, 29th May, and to be printed. [Bill 30.]

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (SCHOOL ATTENDANCE) BILL.

"To alter the age of exemption from Attendance at School," presented by Mr. Walter Rea; supported by Mr. Brunner, Mr. Henderson, Mr. Maddison, Mr. Masterman, and Mr. Yoxall; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th March, and to be printed. [Bill 31.]

COPYHOLD ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

"To amend the law relating to the Enfranchisement of copyhold property," presented by Mr. Winfrey; to be read a second time upon Tuesday 5th May, and to be printed. [Bill 32.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT QUALIFICATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

"To extend the Qualification for being elected on County and Borough Councils," presented by Dr. Shipman;

supported by Sir Francis Channing, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Mr. Adkins, Mr. Charles Roberts, Mr. Bertram Straus, Mr. Albert Dunn, Mr. John Robertson, Mr. Thomas Frederick Richards, Mr. Holt, and Mr. Dickinson; to be read a second time upon Friday, 10th April, and to be printed. [Bill 33.]

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [29th January], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Lehmann.*)

Question again proposed.

MR. WALTER LONG (Dublin, S.) in moving the following Amendment: "But humbly express our regret that your Majesty's advisers have failed to refer to the increase of agrarian crime and disorder in Ireland, or to give any assurance as to the adoption of measures for the better protection of the lives and properties of your Majesty's subjects, and for the repression of lawlessness and intimidation in that part of your Majesty's dominions"—said: I do not think anybody will be astonished at the Opposition taking an early opportunity to challenge the policy of His Majesty's Ministers in Ireland. When the present Government acceded to office there were many flourishes of trumpets, and it was said that they knew what they were going to do and what their powers were, and they constantly told the country that they were not merely the strongest but also the most capable Government of modern times. The supporters of the Government were never tired of telling the country that the position of the present Administration was one of singular strength, because they had a majority which enabled them to defy all combinations of parties in the House of Commons. With what singular advantages did they start upon their career. We were told in regard to Ireland that the policy of the Government was to be very different from that of their predecessors, and it was claimed that they were going to succeed where the Unionist Government had failed. We have now had two years of Liberal Administration, and what has been the result? It is quite true that the results as described by Irish Ministers speaking in London are very different from the results described by Irish Ministers speaking elsewhere. We are now told by the latest exponent of Irish policy that everything is for the best in Ireland, that everything that has been said was exaggerated, and that the use of the word "anarchy" has been altogether unjustified. It is not an agreeable task for anybody to call the attention of the House of Commons to the difficulties of Ireland, and to its darkest instead of its bright spots. I know it has been stated in this House and outside that the object which the Opposition have in view in taking the course we are taking to-night is to gratify our own desire to call attention to the difficulties of Ireland and to play the Party game in order to secure an advantage for our own Party, and by this means to delay the progress of Home Rule. A more grotesque description it is difficult to conceive, and as one who believes in deeds rather than in words, I would point as proof of the truth of what I am saying that the result of our policy when we were responsible for the government of Ireland was not merely to leave Ireland peaceful and quiet, but to leave her far more prosperous than she has been for a long time. It is sometimes said that we have no authority or right to raise these questions, and that there is no need to do so. I claim that our right is derived from the fact that we represent a minority in Ireland, and it is a minority which has never received, and is not likely to receive, much consideration at the hands of the Minister who is now responsible for Irish administration. His dictum that "minorities must suffer" we have heard before.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): Did you hear it for the first time?

MR. WALTER LONG: No, sir. But that does not alter the fact that it was offered by the Minister of the day as an excuse and justification for his policy to those who did not share his views. We on this side represent many people who have appealed to us that their case and their hardships shall be brought to the notice of this House. Nobody can approach a task of this kind with anything but the most profound regret, but to suggest that we do it for the reasons to which I have alluded, and accuse us of being animated solely by a desire to help our Party, is going very much further than is either just or right. When I am told we do it in order to strengthen our case against Home Rule, I rub my eyes with amazement. Our case against Home Rule does not rest on the peaceful condition or the troubled condition of Ireland, nor is it connected with it in the most remote degree That has nothing to do with the argument we offer against Home Rule, and therefore these criticisms upon our actions are altogether unjustifiable. What is the position we have taken up? We have said elsewhere, and we are here to repeat what we have said in the country, that in many parts of Ireland there has been during the last year grave and serious circumstances connected with the lives of the people which not only give rise to profound anxiety, but which we believe are largly due to the policy of His Majesty's Government and might have been averted. To-day some serious questions were put to the Home Secretary to be answered. Not very long after the right hon. Gentleman took office he found it necessary and right to complain very grievously about the action of my hon. friends behind me who come from Ireland. I do not want to revive disagreeable memories. But he used a very hard name, which he applied to my hon. friends; but there is this remarkable fact to be remembered, that hard names after all do not do very much harm. With regard to the questions to which I have alluded, in almost every instance it has been proved that the basis upon which they rested was quite accurate, and in hardly one instance could the right hon. Gentleman contest the statements. In the eight questions asked to-day the right hon. Gentleman admitted that the allegations were correct, and he was bound to follow on with the admission that nothing had been done, and so far as he knew nothing could be done. The hon. and learned Member for Waterford the other day alleged that there was a conspiracy against Ireland. How that conspiracy has been formed I do not know, but the hon. and learned Member made it perfectly clear that he did not include in the conspiracy hon. Gentlemen sitting on this side of the House. He said that what he referred to was a conspiracy in the Press which had for its object the taking away of the good name of Ireland. I am not here to defend the Press, but I am bound to say that it would be a most remarkable thing if, after totally different newspapers, quite independent of one another, had sent over different representatives, all of whom arrived at very similar conclusions, all these gentlemen had been sent over as the result of a conspiracy amongst newspapers to blacken the character of the Irish people. Upon what evidence was this so-called conspiracy started? Was it started upon information derived on this side of the Channel? No; it was based upon the charges of Judges to the Grand Jury. We observe to-day that an hon. Gentleman below the gangway had the strongest objection to the practice which the Chief Secretary says is common both to England and Ireland, by which the Judges have access to the reports of police officers. If what has appeared in the Press is a calumny, if all these statements are untrue, and there is no foundation for the attacks that have been made, why should hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway object to the Judges knowing what the police officers have to report as to these matters. Is it suggested that there is a conspiracy between Judges and policemen. [NATIONALIST cheers.] [An IRISH MEMBER: "Quite right."] If so, why was it that an hon. Member this afternoon was so anxious to call attention to the fact that a certain County Court Judge had nothing to do? Why, when a Judge gives a satisfactory account and says his district is peaceful and contented, is he to be regarded as occupying a totally different position from those who make other statements upon evidence derived from the same people? Why should the newspaper men not be able to give a correct account of the condition of the country they are inquiring into? I am familiar of old with the objections of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway to the Judges' charges, but surely when we find—as we find in the charges of Mr. Justice Andrews, whose name will be received by all Parties with unquestionable respect—unfavourable comment in his charge at the Winter Assizes upon the condition of Leitrim, Roscommon, Sligo, in the East and West Ridings and East Clare, we can believe him. In his review of the condition of things with regard to King's County, Meath and West Meath, Judge Curran said there were the same unsatisfactory reports expressed in the strongest terms in connection with the offence of cattle-driving then going on and still going on in two of these counties at the present moment. In regard to County Longford the same adverse comments are given by the same Judge, but they are not limited to cattle-driving. Indeed, in regard to the County of Longford, the Judge drew special attention to the existence of boycotting in its most brutal form, and he spoke in the strongest terms of the condition of lawlessness in the counties. It is not only the Judges in their charges who have laid the foundations for this allegation of conspiracy of which the hon. Member for Waterford complained. What was the action of the Chief Secretary himself? During the whole of last session the right hon. Gentleman, aided on more than one occasion by the Prime Minister, did all he could to deny the accuracy of the statements made on this side of the House, and to assure the House that everything was satisfactory. What happened within a week of the rising of Parliament? The Chief Secretary, in order that additional police might be sent to them, found it necessary to proclaim six Irish counties on the ground that they were in a condition of unrest. If that had been done by a Minister belonging to the Unionist Party, how the country would have rung with cries of indignation on the part of hon. Members from Ireland that we should have proclaimed them at all. We should have been bitterly attacked for proclaiming the counties after Parliament had separated, when there was no opportunity for our action to be called in question and no opportunity for us to give in our place a justification of the policy we had adopted. But very different treatment has been meted out to the present Chief Secretary. There is no condemnation of him, or of his action, but there is an appeal to the people of Ireland to give him a chance to govern the country. Upon whose terms? Upon the terms of those who have been trying to make government impossible, and not on the terms of those who have been trying to uphold the law. The Chief Secretary takes credit for what he has done, and he will now meet our charge with the statement that a great part of the trouble in Ireland has been due to cattle-driving, which is no longer in existence. I am not at all sure that the statement that cattle-driving is at an end is accurate. Certain it is that in some parts of Ireland, where its appearance was the more significant and the more serious, it is not exterminated. But if it is checked, it is on the most plain and unmistakable notice from those who have told the right hon. Gentleman that if he will carry out their views and introduce arrangements of which they approve, then this practice may no longer continue. If it be true that it has been checked, it is not as the result of vigorous administration. Is it checked as the result of the enforcement of the law or by any special law such as the Crimes Act? I venture to say that if the cessation in cattle-driving is as real as the present Government would have us believe, it is due not to their enforcement of the law, but to the compromise which they have arrived at. Not only have we the charges of the Judges, and the action the Chief Secretary in proclaiming six counties, but we have the language of the right hon. Gentleman the Attorney-General for Ireland, who is himself at the head of an Irish Department. When he had a little time to spare from arguing as to the infallibility of the Attorney General and the divine right of kings he went down into the country to conduct a prosecution for the Crown, and he used some very remarkable language. This was a prosecution for conspiracy—for cattle-driving. It was entirely connected with cattle-driving which took place in County Longford. The case was tried at the Leinster assizes at Wicklow. The Attorney-General, who prosecuted, said—

> "Such a case as this became serious when it 'was part and parcel of a number of similar cases going on throughout the country, which, if allowed to continue, must end, and could only end, in what was called mob law.' It would be an intolerable thing, especially for people living at a distance from large towns, if every Tom, Dick, and Harry in the neighbouring village would be able to dictate what a farmer was to do with his land—whether he was to keep his land or give it up, whether he was to graze or till it, or whether he was to employ labour, or not labour the land at all."

After describing the cattle-drive the Attorney-General said—

> "The state of affairs under which such a thing could happen must inevitably produce open anarchy in the country. It was, in fact, a worse condition of things than was to be met with amongst the savages of West Africa—nothing more nor less than mob law. It rested with the jury to decide by their verdict whether they were going to have a continuance and an extension of mob law, and find later on their own county of Wicklow, which had been peaceful up to the present, plunged into a state of turmoil and terror, like some of the counties in the West, or whether that alarming state of affairs was to cease, and no more of those injuries and injustices be inflicted upon individuals throughout the country."

***THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND** (Mr. CHERRY, Liverpool, Exchange): Will the right hon. Gentleman say what he is quoting from?

MR. WALTER LONG: I have compared the reports in the *Irish Times*, the *Daily Express*, and the *Freeman*, and the only differences in the reports is that in the *Freeman* the language to which I attach least importance about savages in West Africa is not included. These words have been frequently quoted but I attach no importance to them, and if the Attorney-General is sensitive about the reference to savages in West Africa I am preferred to leave out that part of the quotations.

***MR. CHERRY**: The statement has been frequently quoted by the right hon. and learned Gentleman who sits near the right hon. Gentleman. It has been quoted as if I said that the existing state of Ireland was worse than what was to be met with among the savages in West Africa. Certainly I never made such a statement. What I said, and I still adhere to it, was that if cattle driving was allowed to continue unchecked it would produce, or might produce, a state of affairs worse than that to be met with in West Africa.

MR. WALTER LONG: I make no complaint of the interruption, although I respectfully think it was unnecessary, because I think that was the precise effect on the words I quoted. The right hon. Gentleman stated what would happen if that state of things was allowed to go on. That was the language of the Attorney-General, the head of His Majesty's bar in Ireland, not speaking in a moment of heat and excitement upon a public platform, but speaking on one of the most solemn occasions on which the leading law officer of the Crown can be called upon to express his views, namely, when conducting a great constitutional prosecution on behalf of the Crown in the interest of the peace of the country. I do not know that anybody here has used the word "anarchy." I have never described the condition of Ireland as one of anarchy. If that word has been used, it is a little hard that we should be condemned for having used it when you find language such as that which I have read used by the Attorney-General in addressing a jury at Wicklow. I do not intend to say more as to the remark about West Africa, because possibly that is one of the things which he feels, as many of us have felt before, he would rather not have said. With regard to the rest of his address to the jury I think most of us, certainly all law-abiding people, will entirely agree with the case he presented. He meant that the men he was prosecuting were in his judgment, with the full knowledge he possessed, guilty of one of the greatest offences that could be committed. [NATIONALIST laughter.] If it was not one of the greatest, it was in his opinion one which might lead up to anarchy and mob law, and plunge the whole country into turmoil and terror. However, he modified these words, at all events he thought the occasion worthy of one of his best oratorical efforts and his most expressive language. But let me get at what is below the right hon. and learned Gentleman's oratory. It is that this is a great offence, and that the proper and the only way to deal with it is by a verdict of the jury condemning the men.

MR. MULDOON (Wicklow, E.): I wish to ask Mr. Speaker, whether the right hon. Gentleman is in order in quoting from a speech of the Attorney-General, made in the course of a prosecution, in which the jury was discharged, and which might come on for trial again?

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): And is waiting trial now.

*MR. SPEAKER: I see nothing irregular in the use by the right hon. Gentleman of the words he quoted.

MR. WALTER LONG: I have not expressed any opinion of my own as to the guilt or innocence of the persons who are under trial, nor have I said anything to prejudice their position. All I have read is the language used by the Attorney-General, and I have done so in order to show that the statements as to the condition of Ireland are based on the language used, not by those sitting behind me, or by people on this side of the Channel, but by Judges of the High Court in Ireland, by County Court Judges, and by members of the Executive, who by their acts and words had justified everything that had been written or spoken on the condition of Ireland. Let us see how the figures in connection with crime in Ireland bear out the statement of the Minister, who, when speaking in London the other day, said that the offences were of the most trivial character and that the general condition of things in Ireland was, on the whole, satisfactory. What was the condition of Ireland when the late Government left office? Let me remind the House that while we are accused, as we are, of dwelling on the black side of Ireland and talking of her difficulties rather than of her advantages——

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE FOR IRELAND (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): Hear, hear!

MR. WALTER LONG: That statement is cheered by the Vice-President of the Board of Agriculture in Ireland who I have heard, when he sat on the same side of the House in another Government, use very similar language. When these accusations are made just let us see if they are justified; for you have to judge men by their actions rather than by their words. What was the result when we were in office? It was admitted that there was wide-spread prosperity, and a general improvement in the condition of the country; and, in addition, a peaceful state of affairs which was without parallel. The present Chief Secretary when he took office went so far as to talk about Ireland being more peaceful than it had been for 600 years. Yet between the months of June and August last he was called upon to proclaim six counties! It is often said that one of the greatest of Ireland's troubles is emigration. When we left office in 1905, emigration from Ireland was less than it had ever been, but after two years' of the right hon. Gentleman's rule it is greater than it has been for years. I pass from the Judges and the Attorney-General—although I hope the House will not fail to give the right hon. and learned Gentleman's words the importance they deserve alike for the position he occupies and for the words themselves—and pass to the actual statistics in regard to crime in Ireland. The present Government when they came into office abandoned the practice of making returns to Parliament upon agrarian crime. That had been the practice for a very long time, but in obedience to the wishes of the National Party, who have always objected to it and regarded it as unfair, the Government abandoned it. Therefore, the statistics which are available now are only those obtained in answers to questions. Apart from the answers given to-day, from an answer to a question put by my hon. friend the Member for Mid Armagh on 31st January, in regard to agrarian outrages in which firearms were used, it appears that in the year 1906—the year following that in which the Unionist Government left office—the number was twenty-two. In the first quarter of the next year they were thirteen, in the second quarter twenty-two, and the Chief Secretary told the House the other day that in the last half of the year the number had risen to sixty-three, or ninety-eight for the whole year. These particular offences had increased in that startling and deplorable manner simultaneously with the action of the Government in dropping the Peace Preservation Act. It should be remembered that this kind of offence is the most serious of all in its effect on the general community. It is the means by which men can be terrorised and intimidated. This afternoon, in a most remarkable Answer to a Question put to him, the Chief Secretary told us of a case in which a man's house had been fired into, but it was believed that the object of the man who fired the shot was intimidation, and not injury. Further, the Chief Secretary told us that the Government had no information as to the individual who had committed the offence and that there was no hope of an arrest. It struck me as somewhat odd that he had been able to divine what the man's object was—that it was intimidation and not injury! I am, however, quite content to take the answer as given by the Chief Secretary, because one of the allegations we make is that there has been a very large increase in the offence of intimidation. It is one of the worst and most cruel offences which can be committed against a fellow-citizen to fire into a man's house in order to intimidate him to do what the Attorney-General says he has a perfect right not to do; to tell a man to labour his land and not to graze it, to occupy and use it not according to his own desire, but as directed by the man who fired the shot against him. That is the justification, if there were no other reason, for the action we have taken. It is amazing under these circumstances, and in the face of the figures before us, to find the Irish Executive telling us that the whole of our statements are without foundation.

MR. J. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): Give us the figures for England during the same period.

MR. WALTER LONG: I cannot give the figures for England, but I have no hesitation in saying that if a comparison were made between the two countries in regard to the same class of offence it would not be to the advantage of Ireland. If the same class of offence were committed in England in the same proportional number there would be justification for a special Act in England. We should find, however, that of the same kind of offences there were not ninety-eight in England, as in Ireland, nor seventy-two, nor one. Then came the agrarian outrages in Ireland without the use of firearms. In 1906 they numbered 234, including threatening letters, or excluding threatening letters 129; in 1907 the figures had risen to 372, or 190 excluding threatening letters. So far as I have been able to ascertain, since 1892, which was the end of the old bad time which I had hoped had gone for ever, the agrarian offences had never been so high as at the end of the second year of office of the Liberal Administration which was going to do so much for Ireland. The Attorney-General referred to the interference with the liberty of the subject. I think there can be no doubt in any man's mind that if a man is interfered with in his ordinary occupation, whether it be of trade or agriculture, by others of his kind the crime must be considered not by itself alone, such as the mere firing of a gun through the shutter of a house; it must be considered, as Mr. Gladstone said many years ago, more particularly in connection with its origin. its source, and the object which it had in view. Every one of these crimes—such as the use of fire-arms—means an extension of the power to intimidate the people to do what they do not want to do and we hold that that of itself justifies the action we have taken and the language we have used in criticising His Majesty's Executive Government in Ireland. When the Government knew these facts not merely from general information but from the actual figures they had in their possession, to tell us we were exaggerating and that everything in the country was satisfactory was an astounding position for the Chief Secretary to take up. As regards the people under police protection we have no information, but I am told in many quarters that the numbers has very considerably increased. I do not know whether that is so, but the figures given by the Chief Secretary up to June last showed a small increase of twenty-three or twenty-four, and I hope that when the right hon. Gentleman speaks he will give us the statistics of the people in Ireland under police protection. An hon. Gentleman below that Gangway interrupted me just now, and said, "Give us the figures for England." Just so, let us have the figures for England of those under police protection. What would be said if a learned Judge in England went down to hold an Assize and was told that there were so many men under police protection, unable to leave their houses, their children unable to go to school, or their families to go into their gardens, except under the protection of the police? I venture to say that if that state of things could be found in the case of England, we should not be waiting for proposals to come from the Government, but there would be very soon a demand on the part of the people for the strengthening of the law, so as to make things of that kind impossible. With regard to boycotting, there again we have no information. I have no doubt the Chief Secretary will tell us what the facts are. Boycotting is of course an offence—a crime—and of the gravest kind, and I frankly admit that it has gone on for a very long time, and has defied the efforts of more than one Government. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, speaking the other night, said that one reason why the Government were not prepared to use the Crimes Act was that they had been united in objecting to it when it was passed into law; but the right hon. Gentleman also said there was another objection at least as good as that, and that was that the Crimes Act could not be used because they could not get evidence. That is contrary to all the experience of the Irish Government. The Crimes Act was passed in 1887, and the learned Attorney-General will not contradict me when I say that from that period up to 1892 there were some 4,000 people boycotted in the country, but under that Act the number was reduced to fifteen. Therefore, in regard to boycotting, the question of evidence does not come in at all, and the Crimes Act is thoroughly effective in putting an end to that kind of crime. I have admitted that these cases have caused, and are causing, the greatest possible difficulty, but I am bound to say that in some of the cases which have been brought to my notice in the last few weeks the details seem to me to be even more cruel and terrible than any of which I have heard before. There is the case of the McCann family—I am not going into details—but anything more terrible I have never come across, and I confess I am amazed that the Government can remain quietly in office with their hands folded when they have powers at their disposal which they could have used if they pleased, and which they know if they use, according to all past experience, would enable them, if not to get rid altogether of this evil, at all events very largely to diminish it. Passing from the statistics in these cases, I come to the last point and the gravest of all, and that is the complete failure of juries in Ireland, during the last year, to convict. That record is an astounding one. At the summer assizes, fifty-seven persons were put on trial before common juries on charges arising out of agrarian crime. The results were: convictions, three; acquittals, thirty-one; and disagreements of juries, twenty-three. At the michaelmas sittings of the Court of King's Bench in Dublin, before common juries, ninety-four persons were put on trial for agrarian crimes committed in the counties of Galway and Roscommon (changes of venue having been obtained at the Attorney-General's request) at various dates between 27th April and 9th June, 1907. The results were: convictions, five; acquittals, two; disagreements of juries, seventy-two; and Crown abandoned proceedings, fifteen. At the winter Assizes held in December, 1907, at Cork, Limerick and Wicklow, before common juries, eighty-six persons were put on trial for agrarian crimes. The results were: convictions, none; acquittals, eleven; acquittals on legal point by Judge's direction, twelve; and disagreements of juries, sixty-three. Therefore, out of 237 people put on their trial for agrarian offences, eight were convicted; forty-four acquitted; twelve were acquitted by Judge's direction; there were 158 disagreements of juries, and the Crown abandoned proceedings in fifteen cases. These are remarkable figures. In the first place, then, you have the action of the Chief Secretary in not proclaiming these counties, then you have the strengthening of the police force all over the country, then you have the refusal of the Government to employ the Crimes Act, and now you have the juries breaking down as certainly in Dublin they have never broken down before. These are lamentable and startling facts connected with the history of the present Administration which justify the Amendment which I am about to move, and the position which the Opposition are taking to-day. No doubt we shall be told again to-night, as we were told before, that all these stories are wrong and that everything is, comparatively speaking, satisfactory. I hope the Chief Secretary's account will be more in accordance with the facts of the case than the Chancellor of the Exchequer's description on the first night of the session appeared to be. To-day the Chief Secretary was obliged to say that he has been compelled in various districts to increase the strength of the police and in two places in a startling manner. Why do the Government require to increase the strength of the police force? When we were in Ireland we were able to reduce the force by some 7,000 members. Why is it necessary, if the country is quiet and the position is satisfactory, to increase the police? Is it not because you have grave difficulties to deal with, and that there has been an increase in agrarian crime of a serious and lamentable kind? These are the allegations which we have made; we regret to have to make them; but they are based upon the information which we have before us—the best information which we can obtain and which has been more than confirmed by the statistics the Government have produced. Then about cattle-driving. We are told that that matter is no longer worthy the attention of Parliament, because it is over. In the first place I doubt whether it is over, and in the second place it would be impossible for anybody to pass over the cattle-driving incidents of last year without serious condemnation. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, speaking the other evening, described it as criminal and stupid. That is his view. I share his view as to its criminality. I should hesitate many times and oft before I ventured to criticise any language of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who is one of the greatest masters of the English language in the House of Commons or out of it; but I was surprised to hear him refer to an action which was first criminal and then stupid unless he meant that everything which was criminal was stupid. But I am sure that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will not disagree with me here, that there is a difference in the character of his description and that given to cattle-driving by the Leader of the Nationalist Party, who referred to it as an expression of the sufferings of people connected with land. But cattle-driving is now to be made as little of as possible. We are asked to believe that it is over, at all events that it has very largely decreased, and does not need our attention. The Irish Government dealt with cattle-driving in a most remarkable way. I do not know what their views were, because it went on for months—for something like nine months—before the Government thought it necessary to say anything in public on the subject at all. It grew rapidly, spread from one part of the country to the other, until, as the Chief Secretary said, there had been 381 cattle-drives throughout the country, and it had spread into, I believe, sixteen different counties and ridings of counties. It had spread into counties like Meath, where nothing of the kind had ever been known before—counties which were as prosperous and as quiet as any counties in the whole of the United Kingdom, but where, unfortunately, it is still to be found going on even up to the present time. Now, what is the story of the action of the Government? The members of the Nationalist Party, who talk frankly, appear to me courageously to take the view that this was a necessary policy in order to give expression to the people's discontent, and to remove a great difficulty which stood in the way of the people's prosperity. They openly advocated it; they were not in the least ashamed of their words; they neither qualified nor withdrew them, but they repeated them, and many of them advised the people to continue to drive the cattle. What was the advice of the Irish Government? They halted, and at last made up their minds to take their courage in both hands and prosecute. And whom did they prosecute? They prosecuted with all the pomp and ceremony of a State prosecution, with the Attorney-General and the Solicitor-General, and anybody else they felt necessary to effective appearance—they instituted a great State prosecution against four lads and farm labourers who were brought up from the country districts for this purpose. And what resulted? They prosecuted them without any effect whatever; the juries would not convict. I do not wonder that the argument used at these trials in almost every case by counsel appearing in defence of these people was that there was no reality in the prosecutions, and that if the Government meant real business they would prosecute not merely the men who followed, but the men who led. I understand the views of Gentlemen below the Gangway from Ireland; they believe that this is a necessary thing to do. They have the courage of their convictions, but have the Government any courage? If they have not the courage to administer the law, could they not at all events have the courage of their convictions, and if they believe that this is a crime, why do they prosecute the poor labourer and let the Member of Parliament go free? Is it not a new policy for a great Liberal Government to discriminate thus between individuals who are all parties to the same offence, who all ought to have been included in the same indictment? What happened? Not only was there this discrimination and the refusal to accept the declarations of those who were leading these people, but there was this unwillingness to employ the Crimes Act; and therefore, although these offences were committed in March and April, it was not until December that the defendants were brought to trial by the action of the Attorney-General and were tried after a change of venue. I know that Gentlemen opposite have a ready objection to the Crimes Act; they say they must be consistent, and that as they resisted the Act when it was passed they must resist it now. What is the difference in principle in the course adopted by the learned Attorney-General in securing the change of venue by securing it under this elaborate process? If the Government had brought the Crimes Act into operation, the change of venue could have been effected at once without the long delay which prevented justice being done. But this is not all that there is to be said with regard to the want of firm action by the Government. The Government have given us the figures with regard to the cattle-driving prosecutions. We are told that proceedings were taken against 572 persons; that thirty-two were discharged; that with regard to seventy-six information was refused; that of 108 some were convicted and some acquitted; but that 288 were ordered to find bail to keep the peace. This was the result of the Government trial of those accused of cattle-driving. Two hundred and eighty-eight persons were ordered to find bail to keep the peace under a statute of Edward III., which enables a magistrate to deal with such cases. This Act, which has previously been used occasionally to deal with these cases, has been strongly denounced by hon. Gentlemen below the gangway. Now it is to be taken as a credit to the Administration that they refuse to make use of the Crimes Act passed in 1887 on the ground that they voted against it, and make use of this law of Edward III. That is a point of view which we, at all events, cannot approve. I believe, as I have said, that the Crimes Act would enable these prosecutions to be made more successfully; and more than that I believe, without the Crimes Act being brought into operation at all, if the Government had made it perfectly clear from the beginning that they really meant business, and were determined to put these things down and use the whole force of the ordinary law to stop them, and had given orders accordingly, they could have stopped this cattle-driving last year and saved much suffering and expense to individuals, and many thousands of pounds to the Exchequer. We are told, too, that after all nobody was hurt by these cattle-drives, and no harm done to either man or beasts; but I have been informed that several of the police have been rather seriously injured in their effort to stop these drives. I do not know whether that is so or not; I shall be glad to hear from the right hon. Gentleman on the point. As to the cattle it is absurd to say that they are not injured by their being driven long distances and dispersed over the country. In proof that they are injured I would point out that in every case which came before the County Court Judges for compensation, considerable amounts have been awarded. Whatever may be the view of Members of this House, that beasts are not injured by these drives is not the view of County Court Judges, and it is certainly not the view of the men in the country. But whether they are injured or not has nothing to do with the point. Are we to be told that because men are not hurt and cattle are not injured, cattle are to be driven by day and by night by crowds of people without penalty? Because if that is to be the policy of the Government of the day, the new Liberal Government are indeed propounding a policy which will not find favour in this country. Such a thing has never taken place in an English pastoral village, and I do not suppose it ever will, but a crime of that kind if it occurred in England would not be tolerated for a moment. I believe if the Government had acted promptly and vigorously and had made it perfectly clear to the people and the police that they meant to stop these things they could have done so. It is not enough to say that the ordinary law is not sufficient. If it is not, then the Government have a law at their back with which they can deal with these things, and they should have made use of that law rather than have allowed these crimes to continue and the country of Ireland to be turned into a pandemonium. As the Government have thought it right to drop the Peace Preservation Act I most earnestly hope, in the face of the figures and facts I have adduced, in the face of the use of firearms and the steady increase of these crimes by the use of firearms, the Government will undertake to introduce strong measures in order to regulate the sale and ownership of these weapons. It is quite evident from the figures that once the Peace Preservation Act is dropped the possession of arms is largely increased. I am informed now that many shops are open for sale of these weapons, which are freely bought. If that is true and the power to purchase firearms is taken in conjunction with the increase of this crime, then I say it is the duty of the Government to check a practice which is not only injurious to the country, but one which could not be justified by anybody in the interests of the peace of the country. What about the police? Ireland has the finest police force in the world, a force of men who never spare themselves in the execution of their duty. How often have we read in the newspaper accounts—and I have not taken the newspaper accounts without verifying them as far as possible—of some cattle-drive or some other lawless assembly such things as "the police were compelled to retire," "the police helpless," "the police obliged to look on." Are those statements correct? They have been repeatedly made, not on one or two occasions, but many. If they are correct, why is this condition of things allowed to continue? Are the police sent out in sufficient numbers to be able to disperse these assemblies peaceably according to law? I am informed, and again I have endeavoured to verify my information, that in the public duties which they have been called on to perform in some of these riotous assemblies the police have been violently assaulted, and although these assaults have been reported no prosecutions have taken place. I do not know whether it is true or not, but I venture to state that if these reports are correct, the effect on the police and upon the people who look on the police as guardians of the public peace must be disastrous. And what must be the effect in Ireland in the long run? We are told that we bring up these matters because we like to revel in such things, but nobody who cares anything for Ireland can doubt but that the continuance of things like this must be disastrous. What is the answer to all this, apart from the general answer to which I have referred? That it exists only in patches, that it does not exist throughout the country. But is that an answer to the criticism that we have passed on the policy of the Government? Is it an answer to say it is only to be found in patches here and there? Wherever it exists it is a curse to that part of the country, and if it exists in patches it spreads with the utmost rapidity. Then we are told that, notwithstanding what is going on, the country is advancing in prosperity. I rejoice that it should be so. But I ask the House in all earnestness, is it likely that prosperity will continue if this condition of things is allowed to go on? I venture to say in support of the Amendment that whether you go by the opinion of the Judges or whether you go by the actions of the Government itself, by the policy of the Government or the criminal statistics, whatever may be the test you take, the views we have expressed are more than justified by the facts and figures. Although I profoundly regret to have to move the Amendment standing in my name, I move it with no desire to injure the future of the farmers in Ireland, but merely in order to induce the Government to appreciate the need of a vigorous policy in the future. I believe in my heart and conscience that vigour on the part of the Government would have saved much of the troubles that have taken place during the last six months, and I fear that if their policy is not more vigorous in the future these evils will spread and grow to enormous proportions. If I regarded this as merely a question between the two political Parties, I would not raise my voice to urge its consideration in this House; but I do not so regard it. I regard it as a great national question, and it is for this reason that I urge it on the attention of the Government. I move with the greatest earnestness the Amendment which stands in my name, my only regret being that those in Ireland who believe as I do, that the policy of the present Government has failed lamentably, and will cause much suffering to many people in Ireland, have not found one better able in every way to voice their grievances, which are exceedingly well founded, and which I earnestly trust, by firmer and more vigorous administration, the Government will do their best to remove.

*Mr. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.) said he desired to join with his right hon. friend in his earnest protest against the action of the present Chief Secretary, which, he asserted, was directly responsible for a state of affairs that would disgrace any civilised community. The policy which the right hon. Gentleman had carried out in Ireland might have been endorsed by the whole Cabinet, but that fact did not absolve the Chief Secretary from his special responsibility, both as the principal adviser of the Government in Irish matters, and as the head of the Irish Executive. They were unable to agree that the suspension of cattle-driving had made the protest unnecessary. The organised intimidation of occupiers and owners of grazing land, which the Chief Secretary had allowed to continue for so long, had inflicted serious hardship on a large number of people, and had injuriously affected one of the most important industries of Ireland. But that was not the most serious aspect of the matter. The point on which they desired to fix the attention of the House, and of the public outside the House, was the complete abrogation of the law and the paralysis of the executive Government which had resulted from the policy pursued by the Chief Secretary. How did the right hon. Gentleman explain the apparent discontinuance of the practice of cattle-driving during the past month. Would he assert that it was not owing to the imprisonment of the hon. Member, for North Westmeath, who had achieved notoriety as the leader of this movement. In public the Chief Secretary had treated that hon. Member as a person of no importance. At Belfast, in the autumn, the right hon. Gentleman said his fingers were itching to prosecute the hon. Member, but he was restrained from taking that course by fear of making him a martyr and increasing his influence. The Chief Secretary had no right to allow himself to be swayed by any such considerations. The hon. Member was inciting others to break the law day by day, and it was the clear and manifest duty of the Chief Secretary to bring him before the proper tribunal. The right hon. Gentleman declined to take that course, and therefore he had been guilty of a grave dereliction of duty. What the Chief Secretary failed to do was accomplished by Mr. Justice Ross, and it was a fact of great significance that cattle driving had diminished since the leader of the agitation was placed in confinement. If it was asserted that the imprisonment of the hon. Member for North Westmeath had nothing to do with the damping down of the agitation, then they were entitled to ask what were the influences which had produced this result, and what was the nature of the bargain which the Chief Secretary had made with the leaders of the Nationalist Party. It was certain that the Chief Secretary had not taken any steps to assert this authority or to vindicate the law, and they were driven to the conclusion that he had purchased a precarious peace at the price of the degradation of his office and the surrender of his authority to the United Irish League. When the Unionist Members from Ireland first began to call attention to the acts of intimidation and violence which culminated in the riotous proceedings of the autumn, they were accused of maligning and misrepresenting their fellow countrymen. That charge was utterly without foundation. They simply called attention to facts and incidents which the Chief Secretary was compelled to admit were true; but the attitude which the Chief Secretary had taken up towards this cattle driving agitation, and the words which he and other Members of the Government used in reference to it, undoubtedly created the impression, not only that the Government sympathised with the objects of the agitators, but that they actually approved of the methods adopted to clear cattle off the grazing lands. He did not hesitate to say that the people who were induced by the pressure of the United Irish League to take an active part in this movement were largely deluded into the belief that the Government were on their side. The Chief Secretary took no steps to disabuse the minds of the people of this impression, which had been created by his own words, and therefore he must be held accountable for the results. He was aware that within the last few weeks the right hon. Gentleman had offered the inadequate explanation that he was a badgered Minister, speaking under pressure. That was a very poor excuse, and in putting it forward the right hon. Gentleman had simply strengthened the impression that he was quite unsuited to his present office. Surely it was the business of a Minister in the position of the right hon. Gentleman to weigh his words and not allow himself to be badgered into using language which was calculated to encourage lawlessness. The right hon. Gentleman could not be permitted to ride off on this plea. The fact was that his whole conduct as Chief Secretary had been in accord with the spirit of levity which his language so often betrayed. He had had warnings enough, but in his jaunty self-confidence he had despised them all. The Leader of the Nationalist Party after the contemptuous rejection of the Irish Council Bill held out a threat of a "strong and virile agitation" in the autumn. Any one who had the least acquaintance with the history of the Nationalist movement understood at once the form which such an agitation would take. He did not say that the hon. and learned Member for Waterford had the cattle crusade in his mind when he gave utterance to that threat. He had no doubt he was thinking of something very different from it. At all events whether the hon. and learned Member agreed with it or not the agitation had all run into this channel. They were driven to the conclusion that the Nationalist idea of a strong and virile agitation was to drive dumb cattle about the country. The movement had introduced them to a new set of heroes—the heroes of the hazel switch. It had also given rise to a new lawgiver—not the Attorney-General—who had taught that covetousness, theft, and perjury were virtues, and that cattle driving was a holy work. Indeed, these instructors of the Irish peasantry had gone much further, and with daring profanity had added to the Sermon on the Mount the blasphemous beatitude, "Blessed is the cattle driver for he shall possess the land." Was it surprising that an agitation based upon teachings so immoral had lead to the commission of more serious crimes? Ignorant men who were taught that it was holy and heroic to drive cattle from the pastures of the grazier, would not be slow to learn that it was a manly act to crouch behind a hedge and fire upon defenceless men and aged women who were obnoxious to the United Irish League, and that it was equally courageous and humane to stand by and applaud the deed. This distorted view of morality and humanity had produced the most demoralising consequences. When a man wounded by one of these skulking heroes of the hedgerow crawled to a neighbouring house for help, the strong and virile action, according to the Nationalist standards, was to spurn him from the door. Should a compassionate neighbour give the victim any assistance, then these peculiar notions of virility demanded that the Good Samaritan should be boycotted and threatened with death. They were fairly entitled to adopt certain famous words of the Prime Minister to describe such actions as these, and to say that they were "methods of barbarism." In fact the Attorney-General was perfectly justified in saying, as he did at Wicklow Assizes, that it was a worse condition than was to be met with amongst the savages of West Africa. They had been assured by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and also by the representative of the Government in another place, that "apart from cattle-driving there was very little serious crime in Ireland." That statement was completely at variance with the facts. They could only assume that the Government were so imbued with Nationalist ideas that they did not regard boycotting and intimidation as serious crimes, and they looked with absolute indifference at the startling increase in the number of shooting outrages which had taken place during the last twelve months. What were the facts with regard to agrarian outrages generally? The Chief Secretary had informed him in reply to a question that the number of Agrarian outrages reported during 1907 was 372. That figure showed an enormous increase as compared with the years 1903–4. In 1903 there were only 195 agrarian outrages, and in 1904 the number was only 206. He also asked the House to take note of the fact that of the 372 outrages committed last year convictions were obtained in only five cases, though it was true that there were twelve other cases in which proceedings were still pending. That fact illustrated the immunity which was enjoyed under the Present Government by those who organised crime and outrage in Ireland. Hon. Members who supported the Government could have very little idea of the conditions under which men had to live when they had offended against the laws of the United Irish League. Judge Curran had some remarks to make on the subject of boycotting at the Longford Quarter Sessions in January which demanded serious consideration. The learned Judge gave particulars of a number of cases of boycotting that had occurred in that district, and they presented a disgraceful record of organised and illegal tyranny. Judge Curran said—

> "We have the case of the Messrs. M'Cann, who were boycotted because they resisted mob violence and persecution, and asserted their rights to deal with their property as the law allowed them. They had been subjected to a terrible amount of persecution, so much persecution that they can neither buy nor sell their stock at fairs or markets. They are hooted and booed going to and from their place of worship. The unfortunate woman who was earning some £4 a year for cleaning the church in the town of Newtownforbes, a position which she occupied for twenty years, was denounced by the local branch of the United Irish League. Why was she denounced? Because her husband remained faithful to Mr. M'Cann. There was a resolution passed calling on the parish priest to dismiss this woman, and she was deprived of her position by the parish priest in this ignominious manner. A man named Adams remained faithful to Mr. Pearse and died while in his employment, and his family were refused boards to make a coffin for the body. There was also a Miss Conollon who was employed in the town, and she was hunted out of Longford on a resolution sent forward from Sligo which stated that a friend of hers had offended the League of that county. Mr. Percival is unable to buy in Longford, and anyone selling to him, if a member of the League, is expelled from the branch in default of making a public apology and undertaking not to offend again. If not a member the party dealing with him is boycotted."

These cases of boycotting were not confined to Longford. They occurred in other districts, in various parts of Ireland and the Chief Secretary had done nothing to suppress this cruel form of intimidation. Judge Curran, on the occasion to which his right hon. friend had referred had asserted that although he called attention to the same matter in October last—

> "Not a finger has been raised, not a movement has been made by the authorities for the defence or protection of these unfortunate people, or towards putting an end to this persecution."

The judge went on to give this significant warning to the authorities. He said—

> "Experience tells me that boycotting long continued and as persistently resisted has invariably led to serious crime and outrage and even murder."

Was it too much to demand that the Executive Government should extend to these persecuted people not mercy—they did not ask for mercy—but justice, and the protection to which they were entitled at the hands of the law when their persons and property were attacked. Another very disquieting feature of the situation as it existed in Ireland to-day, was the large increase of outrages with firearms. The Government incurred a very grave responsibility when they permitted the Arms Act to expire in 1906. What were the facts known as to the number of shooting outrages? The Chief Secretary stated in July last, in answer to a question put by himself, that during three months ending June, twenty two shooting outrages were reported to the police. In reply to a Question which he addressed to the right hon. Gentleman a few days ago, he informed him that during six months ending 31st December, the number of outrages was sixty-three. That was to say there had been no fewer than eighty-five of those outrages in nine months. That represented an alarming increase in the number of these cases as compared with recent years, and it pointed to the fact that the facility with which firearms could now be obtained had materially lessened the security of human life in Ireland. It was astounding that the Government should allow these proceedings to continue without making any real attempts to punish those who were guilty. The Chief Secretary watched the growth of this disorderly and criminal agitation with cynical serenity. He might have crushed it in a fortnight, if he had chosen to make use of the powers which Parliament had placed in the hands of the Irish Executive to enable them to deal with such an emergency. The right hon. Gentleman had deliberately refused to avail himself of any of the provisions of the Crimes Act. He preferred to fumble with ancient Statutes of Edward III., and William IV., rather than adopt a sharp, effective and modern weapon. By this means he was enabled to make a show of doing something to maintain the law with a minimum of inconvenience to those who were engaged in breaking the law. He left the leaders and organisers of this illegal conspiracy free to pursue their nefarious work of spreading the area of the agitation while he prosecuted humble dupes. He brought these men before Nationalist magistrates who were pledged not to convict or before juries who had conspired to defeat the ends of justice. In case after case where the evidence was absolutely clear and the facts undisputed the jury disagreed and the prosecution led to no result. In fact, a situation was reached which exactly corresponded to the position of affairs once described by the Prime Minister. The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "In many parts of Ireland for certain classes of offences, especially for offences of an agrarian character, they could not trust to the ordinary class of jurymen doing their duty. Partly through ignorance, partly from prejudice, mainly owing to the cruel overbearing system of terror under the National League, they could not be sure of the clearest evidence of obtaining a verdict."

The right hon. Gentleman had changed his attitude towards Irish questions since he made use of those words, but although he had changed the facts had not altered. The recent assizes had shown that it was still the fact that in agrarian cases the ordinary class of jurymen in the Nationalist parts of Ireland could not be trusted to do their duty. The jury system had once again been deliberately broken down by the secret agency of the powerful organisation, which under the present Government had been allowed to override the law of the land. What was the remedy for this state of affairs? Undoubtedly the remedy was the same as was described by the Prime Minister before the Home Rule heresy had perverted his judgment. It was the paramount duty of the Irish Executive to secure a fair and impartial trial of men who were charged with these offences, and, to quote the Prime Minister again—

> "I mean by a fair trial—trial not only fair to the man charged, but to the victims of the offence, and to the community which is injured by the commission of the offence."

The Government had not applied the remedy, and they had therefore been false to their primary duty. They had the means at their command, but they refused to make use of them. The powers which the Crimes Act placed in the hands of the Irish Executive to be used at their discretion could be put into operation without interference with the liberty of any law-abiding person, and they had again and again been proved to be effectual for the purpose of detecting, punishing and suppressing crime. The Chief Secretary refused to make use of these reasonable and lawful provisions which were part of the ordinary law of Scotland, because he and others at sometime or another had labelled them "coercion," and he had, therefore deliberately sacrificed duty to a fantantistic regard for his own political consistency. There had been no more contemptible exhibition of administrative incapacity than had been furnished by the Chief Secretary during the last few months. Confronted by a state of lawlessness which had not only demoralised a large part of the community, but which had done immense injury to one of the most important of Irish industries, the right hon. Gentleman had failed to take the course which his duty and the best interests of Ireland alike demanded that he should take. The result of his inaction had been to degrade the administration of justice and to bring the law into contempt. He could not, therefore, escape responsibility for the disorder and crime which had accompanied the progress of the anti-grazing agitation, and both he and the Government which had tampered with lawlessness and condoned outrage had alike merited the strongest public condemnation.

Amendment proposed—

"At the end of the Question to add the words 'But humbly express our regret that Your Majesty's advisers have failed to refer to the increase of agrarian crime and disorder in Ireland, or to give any assurance as to the adoption of measures for the better protection of the lives and properties of Your Majesty's subjects, and for the repression of lawlessness and intimidation in that part of Your Majesty's Dominions.'"—(*Mr. Long.*)

*Mr. BIRRELL: I shall best serve the interests of this debate if I rise at once to give some account of myself. Nothing would give me more satisfaction at this moment if I thought that the House was really going at this early period of the session to set itself to work to devote its best attention to the real condition, the real welfare, and the real prospects of Ireland. If I had my own way, I would, immediately after this debate on the Address ceased, move that this House do forthwith resolve itself into a Committee to consider the affairs of Ireland, more especially in relation to the position of land purchase and land settlement. I resent more than anything the statement made and repeated that I regard Ireland as a joke. A great many funny things happen in Ireland and funny people may come from Ireland, but Ireland herself is no joke, and the statement that I so regard Ireland is calumnious. I am grievously afraid that unless this House makes up its mind very speedily on one or two questions of the utmost importance as regards land purchase and settlement in Ireland, and unless, having made up its mind what is the proper thing to do, it proceeds to do it—I am grievously afraid that before very long those who come after us will regard with ridicule the pretensions of this House to secure the permanent settlement of the land question. The relevance of this to the present question is very close. Everyone agrees that the permanent prosperity and peace of Ireland—not merely for this year or that, but permanently—depends upon the speedy settlement of the land question, and upon the speedy acquisition of untenanted land [cries of "No"] for the purpose of pursuing the policy to which hon. Gentlemen opposite are hopelessly committed—the policy of making holdings economic, and generally of dividing as much of the land of Ireland as possible and in the shortest time among the men who are ready, willing, and able to cultivate it. I desire to avail myself of the opportunity—an opportunity which does not often occur—to tell the House in a very few words exactly how land purchase stands at this moment; what has been done, and what still remains to do. I confine myself to the proceedings under the Act of 1903. Under that Act there are completed transactions—things accomplished, things done. What are they? In round figures, £19,500,000 in golden sovereigns have been paid to the landlords of Ireland for the purchase of the land. That sum includes the sale to 35,000 tenants direct from the landlords themselves of land which has become vested in the tenants under the provisions of the Act, and through the agency of the Estates Commissioners. But we have in addition the fact that up to the 18th of last month the Estates Commissioners have sold and actually vested in the tenants untenanted land to the value of some £825,000, representing some 75,000 acres; while the Congested Districts Board have bought a great deal of land.

SIR E. CARSON (Dublin Uuiversity): Has that money been paid?

*MR. BIRRELL: The point I am upon is what has actually been done, how many people have secured the benefits of the Act, how many people are in possession of the land, and how many are paying purchasing annuities. But all the Board have actually done under the Act of 1903 in finally disposing of the land they have bought, has been in respect of land to the value of £419,000. That represents the Board's part of the £19,500,000 of golden sovereigns which have been paid to the landlords for this land of which tenants have actually been put in possession as purchasers. There are some £34,500,000 more which are agreed to be paid. Land to that value has been agreed to be dealt with; and the delay that has taken place in completing these transactions is the cause of great, just, and natural dissatisfaction, both to the landlords and to the tenants. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Trinity College, being a lawyer, knows that Shakespeare was quite right when he included the law's delay among the curses of existence. Negotiations are pending with respect to £4,300,000 worth more of land. Therefore we have completed transactions £19,500,000; we have uncompleted transactions to the tune of £39,000,000; and in all we have up to the present between £58,000,000 and £59,000,000 either actually paid or agreed to be paid, money which, I hope, shortly will be paid. I do not attempt to say what the value of Irish land may be. The whole of it, some time or other, is to come under the provisions of this Act. But it is generally agreed that this £58,500,000 does not represent more than one-third of the value of the total amount of land. Two-thirds, therefore, still remain to be dealt with, and those two-thirds the most difficult, the portion representing the most trouble for us. Even Members who were not in the House in 1903 know the method under the Act of that year. The landlord comes to a bargain with his tenant, and if it is within certain prescribed limits, it is a bargain with the terms of which the State has nothing to do. The landlord is paid in hard cash. The State can only pay cash in two ways—by taxation or by borrowing. In this case the landlord is paid by the money which the investor on the Stock Exchange can be induced to give for Irish Land stock. That stock, an impeccable security, guaranteed by the State, carries interest at the rate of 2¾ per cent. The State having thus obtained the money and incurred obligations, seeks and hopes to recover it—and, no doubt, if all goes well, will recover it—from the purchasers by repayments spread over sixty-eight and a half years, those payments representing, with sinking fund, 3¼ per cent. on the purchase money. During the last few days, I am happy to say, the stock has risen. It was, a short time ago, 81; and it is now at something like 89. But even at that price, for every £100 that the State has to pay to the landlord it has to issue stock in excess to the value of £12 4s. We are dealing here with millions, and the excess stock on a million represents £124,000. The excess stock on 100 millions—looking forward to the time when we deal with the hitherto unsolved problem of Irish land, and we shall have to issue far more than that—but the loss in excess stock on 100 millions would be £12,400,000, or an annual charge over a period of sixty-eight years of £403,000. By the Act of Parliament as it at present stands the first thing to meet that charge is the Irish Development Grant. There is only available from that grant an annual sum of £68,000, and consequently, taking the £100,000,000, the charge that will be levied is £335,000, which, under the Act of Parliament, is to be borne by the Irish ratepayer, equal, it has been calculated, to a 5d. rate levied equally over all the rateable value of Ireland. I think the House will agree that that is a perfectly impossible state of affairs. And the situation is made a little grave by the fact that the Irish Development Grant is so small and will very soon be eaten away. The stock may, I trust it may, rise to par. If it does, well, all is well, but whether it will is the point. Some readjustment is essential. You cannot stop land purchase in Ireland. We all agree that the thing is perfectly unthinkable. In four years' time there will be a revision of rents. We must there again hope that there will be no heavy fall in agricultural stock, and that the reduction of rents in that period will be very small. If it is a severe reduction, there are difficulties ahead there. All will agree that at the present moment, and we know the Treasury is considering the question, a readjustment of the terms come to in 1903 is necessary, a reconsideration of the whole position, probably involving an alteration in price. I want, before I conclude this part of the question, to say a word on the relief of congestion, because I do not want hon. Members on either side to ride away and assume either that the problem is being solved or can be put on one side and totally disregarded. At the present rate of progress the Congested Districts Board will take a century and a half to get possession of all the untenanted land in the west to make holdings economic, and, what is more, even if they were to get all the untenanted land to-morrow, which is impossible, and divide it amongst the persons the next day, fitted it for their occupation and use, which, of course, is still more impossible, there is not enough untenanted land in the west to go round and to make the holdings in any sense economic. The difficult, it may be the impossible, policy of migration, is involved in all you have ever said and meant when you made the efforts which you did—the honourably intended, well meant, and courageous efforts—to deal with congestion in the west, if the holdings in that part of the world were to be made economic. Therefore, when the other day Lord Lansdowne spoke of the policy of migration as a crazy policy, I wonder what he meant? It is not our policy. It is the policy of hon. Gentlemen opposite. I know the difficulties of it. You often hear on Irish platforms that God made Irish land for the Irish people. [NATIONALIST cheers.] Yes, but did He make the land of Meath for the men of Mayo, or the land of Roscommon for the men of Galway? I have been supplied with information only to-day which shows me that persons who come from one part of Ireland to another, although they come there as migrants and for the relief of this terrible evil of congestion, meet with a very cold reception indeed [laughter], and are often subjected, I am sorry to say, to violence. I hope the House will not laugh at the situation. There may be those who say that, on the whole, as there is not enough land to go round, it is far better to pursue the policy which the Estates Commissioners are pursuing of putting on the untenanted land they buy the sturdy sons of farmers, and letting them, as the sons of tenants, have their share of Irish soil, and that, if anybody is got away, it may just as well be the "congest" as the sons of tenants. The difficulties of the situation are before us. The necessity at this time, if the whole of this great scheme is—I will not say to be wrecked, because that is impossible, but if it is not to be endangered, it is of the most vital concern and importance that Ireland and the Irish people should approach this problem seriously, and not in a spirit of anger and rage against the Government of the day or against this House; but that we should—every Party in the House, all Irishmen, all men who love Ireland—see what can be done at a very critical period in this land purchase, after you have spent £19,500,000, and are under obligation to spend £59,000,000 and an almost implied Parliamentary contract, if all goes well, to spend, it may be, £150,000,000 or £160,000,000 or even a larger number of millions. Is that scheme to be wrecked for lack of careful consideration by this House of the present position of it? I hope not. These are the thoughts I own that have been pressing heavily upon my mind all during the recess, and it is this position which I should like the House at the earliest moment to consider. And yet, when we meet to put our heads together to consider the welfare of Ireland, I am met with this Motion. This is the extraordinary Tory contribution to the situation. This is the way to maintain good will and temper all over Ireland to discuss a difficult problem. This is the pressing need of the hour—more coercion. I am free to confess that during all these months I have been exposed to a good deal of personal abuse, and that very hard things have been said against me — far harder than I have ever said against anybody else. I have paid very small concern to them. I have been terrified by more serious considerations than their words. I know that Latin quotations are rather out-of-date in this House; but I am disposed to say, when I have listened to all these speeches and harangues against me about cattle-driving and the like, and when I have compared the gravity of that question, grave though it may be, with the real gravity of the whole question of land purchase and land settlement, I have said—

> "Non me tua fervida terrent
> Dicta, ferox; Di me terrent, et Jupiter hostis."

If you want a translation of those words, I am not afraid of it. I will tell you what it is they really mean. They mean: Cattle-driving does not terrify me. No, nor the wild and extravagant language of political enmity and partisanship. What frightens me are the price of stocks, the series of inclement seasons, the unrealised, aye, and it may possibly be the unrealisable, hopes that the legislation of this House has indelibly planted in the breasts of a land-hungry and impressionable people. What are the facts upon which this fierce declamation is founded, and what is the complaint? The facts are that the state of certain parts of Ireland at the present moment is not so satisfactory as it was this time last year. I admit it to the full. It is not as satisfactory as it was this time last year. The figures show it. Take the boycotting returns. If there is one thing I hate more than another, it is boycotting. [AN OPPOSITION MEMBER: "Why do you not stop it?" and a NATIONALIST MEMBER: "Could he stop it?"] Stop it! Read the Newport speech of Lord Salisbury, and you will learn how futile is that observation. You might as well seek by violent measures to put down covetousness. [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh."] Yes, or indict a man for not loving his neighbour as himself as to attempt, by your repressive legislation, to prevent boycotting. I say I detest it, I loathe it. It is a negation of Christianity, a repudiation of humanity—as many bad names as you can put upon it. In 1906 there were ten serious cases—and a serious case of boycotting in Ireland is a very serious case—and in this last year there were nine. I do not take any gratification to myself upon the fact of the figure being reduced by one. It is still nine too many. In minor cases there has been an increase from thirty-four in 1906 to 116. But, after all, Ireland must be compared with herself. These figures are no new thing. They have been preserved and kept for many years; and, in 1902, I find there were forty-one serious cases of boycotting, as against nine now, and 148 minor cases, as against 116. It is most interesting to see how these 116 cases are allocated. Thirty-three of them are attributed to disputes about evicted farms; twenty-three have arisen from these grazing land troubles; six are attributed to the unpopularity of a landlord; and twenty to quarrels about land purchase; miscellaneous, private feuds, and other causes, thirty-four. Of persons receiving constant police protection in 1906, there were fifty-five; at the end of 1907 there were fifty-nine—an increase of four; by patrol, at the end of 1906, there were 150; at the end of 1907, 222. In 1899, if I go back, I find seventy-six persons receiving constant police protection, as against fifty-nine to-day; that there were 515 by patrol, as against 222 to-day; and that in 1902 there were sixty-nine receiving constant police protection and 332 by patrol. I now come to the worst phase, the firing into houses. I entirely agree with what fell from the right hon. Gentleman that this is a particularly cruel and violent form of intimidation, but I was rather surprised that he, with his experience, should have expressed astonishment that the police should be able in one particular case to suggest that the motive was probably intimidation and not any desire to do violence to anybody within the house. How, he asks, could they know that? They could know it very easily. It depends on what part of the house is fired at—whether they fire into the residential part, into the living rooms of the house, where people may be supposed to be, or whether they fire at that part of the house that is not occupied. It is only fair, it is only charitable—I will not say Christian in such a connection—to suppose that their object in the latter case was intimidation and not an attempt to murder or do injury to a person. Now in 1906 there were nineteen cases of firing at the person with pellets, a most cruel and abominable offence, and I wonder that it has not often resulted in the death of the persons fired at, which happily has not been the case—nineteen persons were fired at, none killed. In 1907 that nineteen had grown to twenty-six. Firing into houses grew from twenty in 1906 to sixty-six in 1907, while firing outside houses—that is to say, in gardens, in plantations, and so on—which has an intimidatory effect without the injury caused by firing into houses, was the offence in fourteen instances in 1906, and twenty-six in 1907, and as the figures have been given the total of agrarian outrages in 1906, including threatening letters, had grown from 234 in 1906 to 361 in 1907. Now these are the figures apart from cattle-driving, and on these there is no desire to conceal information from the Houss the number of offences up to 31st December was 381. Very well then, I do not quite understand—there is a little difference in the speeches of mover and seconder of the Amendment on the point—I do not quite understand whether the mover greatly blames the Government for not putting in force some of the provisions of what is commonly called the Crimes Act. The seconder gave rise to no such doubt; he accused the Government of grave dereliction of duty in not putting those provisions into force. [OPPOSITION cries of: "Hear, hear!"] And I gather from those cheers that is the general sentiment among the Party opposite. [OPPOSITION cries of: "Hear, hear!"] Well, I only hope that before the division is taken Members who were not in the House in 1887 will refresh their memories of what took place in the notorious debates of that date. They will find the records in 312 and 313 of *Hansard*, third series, and I commend to them to the reading of hon. Members. They are worth reading when read by the light of subsequent events, and it is, I think, only by that light that our debates are ever much worth reading. The leader of the Opposition, whose absence to-night and the cause of it I greatly regret, and personally regret as a deprivation, in 1887 had just entered upon his stormy career as Chief Secretary for Ireland, and one of the duties he had to perform was to introduce the 87th Coercion Act and make it permanent, with a note of originality he still possesses in all things. Speaking on 28th March, 1887, he rested his case, he was careful to say, not on the statistics of agrarian crime, and he was perhaps wise not to rest his case very strongly on the state of agrarian crime, as the statistics were then much worse than they are now. He rested his case on a quotation from Mr. Gladstone, a quotation which I was surprised to find the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Dublin to-night referring to. Mr. Gladstone said—

> "The question was that you must not only consider the amount of crime, but you must take that amount into consideration, and with its source, its character, with what it indicates and what it means."

Now, I need scarcely say that I, an humble follower of Mr. Gladstone, accept that tribunal, and submit to the law as there expounded, and upon these words adopted as they are by the right hon. Gentleman I am perfectly prepared to rest my case and to construct my whole defence. What is the source of this increased disturbance? What is its character, what does it mean? Its source is disappointed hope, unrealised expectations. In its character it is an agitation lawless and reprehensible, but still unaccompanied in most instances and cases by anything that can properly be called crime and outrage. [OPPOSITION cries of: "Oh, oh!" and NATIONALIST cries of: "Hear, hear!"] It has for its meaning speedier action in the division of grass lands. I am prepared to maintain, and nobody who reads the debates in the House during the discussion of the Act of 1903 can deny or will wish to deny what is perfectly plain on the face of the whole discussion and in the Act itself, that part of

Mr. Birrell.

the practical plan was that untenanted land fell within the scope, the purview, the intention of that measure. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover, in introducing the Bill, in his speech preceding the Second Reading, and in very many observations during the Committee stage made this perfectly plain. I do not want to stop to make too many quotations, but I will just give his words in introducing the Bill. He said—

> "I come now to the provision dealing with untenanted land. We have first the actual tenant on an existing holding which is sold to him, but some of these holdings ought not to be sold unless they are increased in size; and in the neighbourhood of estates there are congested populations which ought to be dealt with. We therefore say that untenanted land may be added to the holdings which are uneconomic owing to their small size. Such new holdings created from untenanted land may be sold under the Bill to tenants on an estate, the sons of tenants on an estate, tenants in the neighbourhood whose holdings are less than 10 acres and £5 annual value, and to any person who within twenty-five years before the passing of this Act was the tenant of such a holding."

Then the right hon. Gentleman went on to say—

> "This Bill has created many expectations and among others among persons who own a great deal of untenanted land in the west of Ireland, where it is most needed if we are to deal with the problems of congestion; and several persons have shown a disposition lately to create holdings on the off-chance that the credit of the Exchequer will be placed at their disposal."

He proceeded to show how a check could be put upon those who were creating holdings to be bought up. Other expectations besides those of landlords were created in other minds, and the Estates Commissioners were authorised to purchase untenanted land subject to a provision that the amount should not exceed a certain sum. Then again, immediately before the Division on the Second Reading, the right hon. Gentleman regretted he had not time to express his views completely, but he admitted in the clearest possible form that the purchase of untenanted land was in the Bill. These expressions, used in debate in support of the Bill, and used again by Irish Members, did undoubtedly raise great hopes in the minds of the land-hungry population of Ireland; but five years have gone by, and what has happened? The Estates Commissioners have bought 75,000 acres of untenanted land, upon which they have placeed tenants. What has the Congested Districts Board done? It is calculated that in the scheduled districts there are at least 74,000 holdings of about £5 annual rateable value, and certainly under £10, and in the non-scheduled districts 59,000 similar holdings, making 133,000 in all. Up to date the Congested Districts Board have bought 15,000 holdings of all sizes, and they are careful to tell us, being honourable men, that part of these when resold and distributed will still be uneconomical. Therefore, for the relief of congestion it may be said that only 7,500 holdings have been fully dealt with. How long will it last at this rate? I do not wonder—who can wonder at the impatience of the people? Am I not, following the words of Mr. Gladstone, entitled to ask myself—What is the source of this agitation; what is the origin of it; what is the cure for it? I maintain I am. Nobody who has visited these districts, walking, riding, or motoring through them, can be surprised to learn that the retention in the hands of the landlords of vast areas of untenanted land, amounts to a daily declaration of the futility, the emptiness of their hopes, and excites impatience among the people. Until something is done to cure this, until steps can be taken to divide these lands, though you may have law and order, you will not have peace. You will not have contentment in those parts of Ireland until you admit what the Congested Districts Board has admitted for many years past, until you give compulsory powers to break up these grass farms. You cannot have just as much and just as little of land revolution as you choose. This House at the bidding of the Unionist Party has deliberately chosen a path for the relief of congestion which is known to be a difficult and costly path, and it must be traversed to the end; there is no getting out of it unless you go out of Ireland altogether. What makes all this more curious is that it is only a question of price. The landlords are perfectly willing to sell their lands; they are tumbling over each other in anxiety to sell the land. It is wholly a question of price; we are all agreed that it is to be a fair price, an honest price fixed by a fair tribunal, therefore all this fuss is nothing more than the haggle of the market. We all know the source of these troubles, we know why the people admittedly indisposed to crime, admittedly a people pleasant to get on with, commit these reprehensible and illegal offences of cattle-driving and are led into reckless lawless acts of an intimidatory character causing the greatest anxiety to those who are responsible for the government of Ireland. We see the material before us, and it is downright folly if we do not recognise the course to be taken if we are to seek the permanent welfare of the country. But hon. Gentlemen said, "What about matters in the meantime? Have you no regard for law and order? Why are not the gaols of Roscommon and Galway crowded with prisoners, sent there by the warrants of two resident magistrates, one of whom shall be certified by the Lord-Lieutenant to have proper qualifications?" Well, I would not say a word against resident magistrates, men of great ability, great courage and popularity, men who, no doubt, do their duty. I cannot say more for them. I wish they were all immortal. Every time one dies it is an open competition, and we at the Irish Office are inundated with letters from all sorts of persons from all parts of the world, all craving to become resident magistrates in Ireland—young men of good families, middle-aged men with long families, and the worst of the matter is that I defy anybody, I do not care how devoted he may be, in dealing with all these people, belonging to all professions, of all kinds and classes, some of them barristers who have left off practice, some solicitors willing to give up practice, half-pay officers, young captains, military men ——[AN HON. MEMBER: "Journalists"]. I do not remember any journalist applying. I am speaking now of resident magistrates, and it is really a serious point, because these people are charged with most important duties, and according to you are fitted to be charged with dealing with the whole of the difficult law of conspiracy without the intervention of a jury. I say there is no test by which you can distinguish between all these applicants who are the best. They all have wonderful testimonials. Different persons have equally good testimonials from the same person. You have to choose out of 500 or 600 applicants who is the best man to be charged with the good name and welfare of Ireland in the district in which he lives. I say no good would have been done at the present moment in the solution of the difficulties which are most pressing now, even if the gaols of Galway and Roscommon were full of prisoners committed on the warrants of these resident magistrates. Hon. Gentlemen opposite are disturbed because no Members of Parliament are in prison. One hon. Member, the Member for South Longford, has stood his trial.

MR. JAMES CAMPBELL (Dublin University): For actual cattle-driving?

MR. BIRRELL: Yes.

MR. JAMES CAMPBELL: Not for inciting?

MR. BIRRELL: No; but still we were not frightened by the majesty of his person as a Member of Parliament, and he had to stand his trial like any other person, and a Wicklow jury disagreed as to his guilt. That is, no doubt, the way of hon. Gentlemen opposite. If trouble arises they say: "Suspend the ordinary law." If juries sympathise at all with prisoners, they say: "Get rid of juries at once." That is sometimes your way, though not always, as I shall show. It is never our way to suspend the ordinary law if we believe that disturbances are due to removable causes, and that justice demands that we should proceed to remove them. Until that is done the ordinary law is good enough for us. We have not left the ordinary law alone. We have worked it with the utmost vigour. My right hon. friend the Attorney-General will give the figures on that subject. I stated them myself on Friday. The Attorney and Solicitor-General have been kept hard at work all the autumn in their endeavours to put these cases fairly and properly before juries. It is said that juries have failed. Well, in the first case that came before a Dublin jury there was a conviction. It was no stronger than the other cases, and I believe it is quite possible that, if the learned Judge had thought fit to pass sentence at once, it might very well have been that other convictions would have followed. It is not an unknown thing, even in this immaculate country of England, for juries, when they are in sympathy with a prisoner, to be anxious to know what kind of sentence is to be passed on him before they find him guilty, and sometimes negotiations of a very irregular character have passed before they would find him guilty. However, the learned Judge thought fit, in dealing with this case, in which the traversers had been convicted and found guilty, to direct them to stand aside; and therefore the other jurors had no clue to the kind of sentence he was going to pass, and there were disagreements. I do not deny that in these cases of cattle-driving the juries have shown sympathy with prisoners; but the question I ask myself is this: "Is it to be said that the moment a Government or Executive find that out they are by a stroke of their pen to get rid of juries altogether," and thereby prevent juries doing the only good thing they can do, from giving the only lesson they can teach—I do not suppose that for the discovery of the truth anyone would pin his faith on a jury—that they may prove the means of letting the Executive know what the feelings of the people are. I am bound to confess I am sometimes amazed at the ignorance of hon. Gentlemen opposite. I say you cannot read a single work on trial by jury in which you will not find that point stated with reference to both English and Irish juries. I remember that that is referred to in a remarkable passage often quoted from De Tocqueville, but being written in another language I suppose it is considered of no importance. In that passage it was stated that that was the sole reason why people adhered to trial by jury, because it gives an indication, sometimes rightly, sometimes wrongly, of the feeling of the people. A hundred years ago a man shot his fellow in a duel. He was indicted for murder, and towards the end of his charge the Judge would tell the jury that they had no alternative but to return a verdict of "Wilful murder." They did not do it. They felt that the man had no choice but to do what he had done, and that the death was not to be attributed to him as murder in the ordinary case. But it was murder and wilful murder, though juries refused again and again to give verdicts of guilty. Everyone knows that in England juries have expressed their sympathy most improperly in certain kinds of cases, and therefore if you ask: "Why do you not sweep this system aside?" the answer is because, in criminal cases, it has the advantage that it prevents the Executive from getting completely out of touch with the feeling of the people. If they do not respect the law, all is up with your Crimes Act and all the rest. It may be a painful and a long process, and it may result in a certain amount of injustice, but it is a far more courageous course, at all events, for people charged, as we are, with the interests of Liberalism, to give the best trial always to the recognised institutions of the country before you attempt to set them on one side. I said just now it was not always the policy of hon. Gentlemen opposite to put the Crimes Act in operation. In 1900, I find that a body of great importance, the Irish Unionist Alliance, were greatly disconcerted at the state of Ireland, and particularly at the administration of Ireland by Lord Cadogan and Mr. Gerald Balfour. No use had been made of the Crimes Act, and Mr. Gill had been appointed Secretary of the Board of Agriculture. *The Times* incited the people of Ireland to assert themselves like men, and particularly to let England know what terrible things were going on unmolested under the rule of a Unionist Government. The Alliance demanded an interview with Lord Cadogan, and he flatly refused them. He was not going to have his administration arraigned even by the Irish landlords. He was a high-spirited Tory nobleman—I, poor worm, in precisely similar circumstances saw them and sat patiently in my stall for an hour and listened to all they had to say. I had this excuse, a feeling of curiosity. I had this advantage over Lord Cadogan—I had not seen them before. Flouted as they were by their own Lord-Lieutenant and Chief Secretary, they were determined that the world should not lose anything of the information they had to impart, and they met somewhere in Grafton

Street, Dublin, and signed a document. It was addressed: "To His Excellency the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, Earl Cadogan, K.G." and in it they said—

> "The Executive Committee of the Irish Unionist Alliance representing as they do more fully than any other existing organisation the Unionists of Ireland, have unanimously decided that it is their duty to lay before your Excellency certain facts as to the state of this country, and the present position of Irish Unionists. The Alliance includes among its members, representatives of both sections of the Unionist Party, and not only the leading landholders, but the leading members of the manufacturing and commercial interests. They do not desire that Ireland should be governed in the interests of any class, but they hold that it is the duty of a Government to maintain order, to secure freedom, for every man in all lawful dealings, to check violence and injustice, and to place in positions of trust persons who have given evidence that they respect the laws of the country and have its true interests at heart. They hold that Ireland should not again be allowed to drift into a state of social anarchy and veiled civil war. And having been deprived by the Legislature of much of the power which it is admitted they exercise with integrity and ability, Irish Unionists consider that the Executive is the more urgently called upon to protect them from wrong."

Having thought it their duty to lay their case before his Excellency, they went on to contend that the United Irish League ought to be put down and suppressed. They said—

> "The objects of the League are the expulsion of landlords, reunion of disorganised factions of the so-called Nationalist Party and a new campaign for the destruction of the Legislative Union. It holds out as a bribe to the people the division of large grass farms, the property in many cases of loyalists. The organisers began by calling upon the holders of these large farms to surrender them, irrespective of their wishes or convenience. This proving ineffectual intimidation was resorted to. They worked by domiciliary visits from agents of the League, and by threatening speeches of the organisers on platforms in the vicinity of such pasture lands. They endeavoured to terrify the occupiers into the abandonment of their lawful rights, and they have succeeded."

Dealing with recent crime the Alliance said—

> "The circumstances connected with the crimes which have recently shocked the country are best known to the authorities, but at the same time the Alliance cannot but note the fact that meetings under the auspices of the United Irish League, at which violent speeches were delivered, were held shortly before in the immediate vicinity of the scene of the murders. The recrudescence of boycotting has forcibly arrested the attention of the Alliance. Guided by Nationalist agitators, who are able as they say to keep within the law—in reality to evade it—the lives of many peaceful members of the community are being made unbearable. The methods enforced sooner or later compel the victims to comply with the mandate of their persecutors."

That is a state of things corresponding very much to a picture of the existing state of things. Here are intimidations employed for the purpose of breaking up grazing lands, and dissuading graziers from taking them, intimidatory speeches by prominent members of the League on platforms erected in close vicinity to these grazing lands, and yet to the disgust and horror of the Irish Unionist Association, Lord Cadogan and Mr. Gerald Balfour refused to do anything, and nothing was done, and the Crimes Act was not put into force at all until I think April 1902 when there was a change of *régime*, and apparently a change of policy. Now the state of things in 1902 was I maintain, worse than the state of things to-day. I have no particular pleasure or gratification in the state of things now. I admit that there is cause for anxiety and alarm. I say we have ascertained the source, and have at all events the example of Lord Cadogan and Mr. Gerald Balfour behind us in disregarding these demands to put in force extraordinary laws. With regard to shooting, I should like to say one word. The worst figures that I have had to call the attention of the House to, were those connected with firing into houses. I have made constant inquiries from the police themselves, and it has been admitted in these debates by several persons who are perhaps better acquainted with Ireland than I am, that this is a particular kind of offence against which evidence is the hardest to procure, and therefore, unless you are going to put in force all the provisions of the Crimes Act which you have very seldom done yourselves, and I have here the full particulars of what you have ever done, you the party of law and order, the authors of the permanent 1887 Coercion Act—you yourselves very seldom, even in bad times put all its provisions into force, and yet unless that is done the Crimes Act is no use in these firing cases. From beginning to end of all these troubles I have submitted to myself one test, and I believe it to be a true test for me at all events, for a Liberal Minister, a member of a Liberal administration, and it is this. Could I now on the facts and figures that I have before me, with the knowledge that I possess of all the trouble and disturbance in certain parts of Ireland, with the knowledge of what their source is and how best they can be cured; could I with that knowledge, and with the facts and figures stand up at this table and ask the House of Commons to vest me with the powers of the Crimes Preservation Act? Could I carry with me this House—I do not want the House necessarily to pass a new Act—could I get the House on these facts and figures to endorse and support me? I could not. If I might indulge in an Irishism, I should vote against myself if I did. I feel that we have the completest possible answer to all that has been urged, but there are one or two points I think I ought to refer to. It has been alleged by the hon. Gentleman who seconded the Amendment that I have entered into a corrupt bargain with the bishops of the Church of Rome to give them good terms. That charge was made—

MR. LONSDALE: Not by me.

MR. BIRRELL: Very well, then, I will withdraw. I am very glad. I understood the hon. Member to hint at something. I accept his withdrawal. It was made certainly by Lord Londonderry in another place, and it has been frequently made. The fact that such a statement would be an insult to me I pass over, because I am inured to that kind of thing, but it is also an insult to the bishops of the Church of Rome—a gross insult; and as they are not here, and as they do not perhaps know the manners and customs of this House, I feel myself bound on their behalf to protest against any such imputation being made upon them. I went to see Cardinal Logue on the University Question. He is a Prince of the Church, I daresay, but he is also one of the simplest and most devout Christian men I have ever met. He seemed to me to think of nothing else so much as the spiritual interests of his country. I simply told him the lines on which we were proceeding, and suggested that he might hereafter very likely tell me what he thought of them. I made no proposals or suggestions of any kind to him, and the subject of cattle-driving, I need hardly say, was not mentioned. Think what the inuendo is. I go to a prelate and accept his hospitality. I say, "I have come here on business—to use a vulgar expression, let us do a deal together. I shall be in a very hot corner in the House of Commons in January or February next if this wretched cattle-driving is not put down. Your Eminence has great influence and authority over all parts of Ireland. If you will only exercise it on my behalf, if you will only get me out of this hole, I will use all the influence I can with my Nonconformist friends in the House, and either with their consent or behind their backs smuggle through some clause in the University Bill which will make the University a clerically conducted institution." That is the nature of the charge. So far as I am concerned I am indifferent to it, but on behalf of the Bishops I think I am entitled to protest against it. I frequently saw the Archbishop of Canterbury during the discussions on the English Education Bill. I wonder what would have been said if an Irish newspaper had said the Archbishop had entered into some sort of private arrangement with me whereby Catholic interests and the interests of Catholic children were to suffer, and in exchange for that I was to give him good terms for the Church of England. Would that not have been an insult to the Archbishop? Are not the prelates of the prevalent religion in Ireland entitled to as much consideration? I protest as vehemently as I can. The other charge, happily, only concerns myself. It is that because I am a Home Ruler, as I am—I voted for the Second Reading of Mr. Gladstone's Bill, and made the first speech I ever made in the House which has any pretensions—I mean pretensions to length—in support of that measure. It is not likely that, going to Ireland as a Home Ruler, I should be converted whilst there, though some distinguished Members of the Unionist Party have gone to Ireland to govern it as Unionists, and have either become Home Rulers or something like it But because the fact that I am a Home Ruler is undisputed, hon. and right hon. Gentlemen—the Leader of the Opposition at all events hinted at it, that I, in my anxiety to secure Home Rule, deliberately allow crime and outrage to go on unchecked all over Ireland in order that there may be such a condition of anarchy and confusion that the English people will gladly say to Ireland, "Go off for Heaven's sake, take yourself off." What sort of imputation is that to make? If one half of it were true I should be a monster. Anyone who had the misfortune to live in my company during the last four or five months would know perfectly well that every outrage which is reported to me causes me the acutest possible pain. These things stand in my way, and frustrate my dearest hopes. They do the greatest possible injury. There is nothing that I would not do to put them down. "Then," say Gentlemen opposite, "you have your remedy, this marvellous panacea, this Act of Parliament, which will put down boycotting and intimidation, which will prevent people at night time firing into each other's houses. I do not believe it. The experience of history is opposed to it. You have tried these things again and again. You have repeated your experiment again and again, until in '87 you thought fit, having a majority of your own, to make it a permanent addition to the Statute Book, and now you come to me and say, "You are bound to put it in force because it is there." I won't. By devoting some portion of this Session to a grave and careful consideration of the state of things in Ireland—the real state of things without doing injustice to anybody, a great work can be done. It is all very well for noble Lords in another place to use language about revolution—agrarian revolution. "Agrarian," I believe, comes from a Latin word meaning land. If it is a land revolution, what is the price of land in Ireland? It is not one which looks much like revolution. The Irish landlords get better terms for their land than any landlords have ever got. It is rather too much to hear noble Lords representing the landlords of Ireland, who have done so marvellously well under the bargain of 1903, now turn round upon their poorer fellow countrymen, denouncing them and pretending that the only way in which law and order can be maintained is by the suppression of free institutions. It is rather more than I, as Chief Secretary, can understand or put up with. Therefore the case made out against me is not difficult for me to meet, and I believe when the time comes for the House to express their votes to-morrow, they will

do so in such a manner as to give us courage to go forward.

*Mr. BUTCHER (Cambridge University) said the Chief Secretary in the course of his speech had reminded the House of the importance of the question of land settlement, but he ventured to say that the subject, into which the right hon. Gentleman had entered in some detail, was not very relevant to the issue before the House. Relevant, indeed, it was, in one respect only, and that was that the action of the Executive in Ireland had thrown back the question of land settlement beyond anything one would have thought possible. If land settlement was to be carried out with permanent success in Ireland, it must be carried out under the rule of law and not under a reign of terror. When the Chief Secretary went on to quote and interpret a statement of Mr. Gladstone's, it became evident how much he was under the dominion of so-called Irish ideas, which were in truth ideas that every honest and respectable man in Ireland condemned as much as they did in that House. He told them that the source of the increased disturbance was disappointed hope. Its real source was agrarian cupidity, stimulated by the guilty apathy of the Executive. In its character the right hon. Gentleman declared the movement to be a lawless agitation, but unaccompanied in most instances by crime or outrage. On the contrary, not only was the movement reckless and lawless in character, but its distinctive mark was that it attempted by criminal short cuts to gain its ends. And what, the right hon. Gentleman asked, was its meaning? It had, he replied, for its meaning speedier action in the division of the grazing lands. Yes, speedier action; its true meaning and intention was to forestall the action of that House, and to coerce Parliament into sanctioning the work of crime. Indeed the planner of the cattle drive, the Member for North Westmeath, promised at the outset that there should be "an Act of Parliament confirming their blessed work and making it the law of the land." And no later than the 28th January, the Member for South Meath, in a speech reported in the *Roscommon Herald*, a journal that no doubt would be recognised as an authentic source, proclaimed that, "The only way in which legislation can be forced is by cattle-driving." Such was the "speedier action" spoken of by the Chief Secretary. All this, too, at a moment when Parliament was more ready than it had ever been in its history to look at the Irish question with an impartial eye, and to redress all legitimate grievances. He must say, the phrase used by the Chief Secretary—"the condition of Ireland is not so satisfactory as it was," a mild phrase for those who know the real condition of certain parts of this country. Was it not an incredible thing that there should be honest ignorance as regards an island which was only a few hours distant from our shores—in the minds of people who, surely, had had the means of ascertaining the facts? They heard very conflicting statements. On the one hand, apologists for the Government in the Press and on the platform said that Ireland on the whole was crimeless and peaceful. They admitted that there was some disorder, but it was insignificant in character and amount, and confined to a few restricted areas. One of the official organs of the Government actually asserted that cattle-driving had done no injury to man or beast, and had never been a menace to person or property. On the other hand they had statements from County Court Judges and from Judges of the High Court of a very different kind. A few days ago Judge Curran, at Trim in County Meath, said, "What I find in King's County I find in County Westmeath, and what I find in County Westmeath I find in Longford, and what I find in Longford I find in County Meath." And what did the Judge find in Longford? His words ten days before at Longford were, "I see the laws under which we live are flouted and trampled under foot, and mob-law reigns triumphant in a certain portion of the country." In some six or eight counties the language of the Judges was similar. Which statement were they to accept? Which was the more trustworthy authority, the word of the politicians or the charges of the Judges? Anyhow the two statements stood opposed to one another in striking contrast. Let there be no mistake about it—cattle driving which was sometimes spoken of merely as a reckless pastime, was a crime and part of a criminal scheme. It was an act of mob violence, intended to force a grazier to give up his lawful calling. Nor was there any disguise as to the predatory motive—"Blessed are the cattle-drivers for they shall possess the earth";—that was the text of the new beatitude. The reward held out was plunder, and the weapon was fear. For, observe, cattle-driving was not an isolated incident, it did not stand alone. The cattle drive was the first of a series of criminal acts—the first link in the chain. What if the grazier were a brave man and refused to give up his land? The whole machinery of terrorism was at once put into motion. A meeting was held of the local branch of the United Irish League, with its mock court and solemn parody of justice. An apology was demanded. The man still held out. His meadows were perhaps "spiked," his hay-ricks burned and, in many cases, his cattle mutilated. All who worked for him, all who supplied him with the necessaries of life, were warned to desist. Cattle-driving, therefore, was merely the first step in a criminal process. Might they not then fairly complain that in the speeches made recently by members of the Government not a hint was found of the sequel of cattle-driving and of the train of tyranny and disorder it carried with it? One instance might suffice; the Chief Secretary must be well aware of the facts. To-day in the County Langford, a boycott existed, already mentioned by his hon. friend the Member for Mid Armagh, one of a kind which could only be equalled in the annals of the old Land League—he referred to the boycott of the McCann's. He would not go through the whole list of cruelties perpetrated on McCann; he would only mention that within a few days of the declaration of the boycott, McCann found himself not only deserted by most of his labourers, but with his bread supply cut off; he could not get bread either in the village or in the county. He then ordered it from a wholesale bakery in Dublin, and in this way obtained a supply for two months. The boycott became more stringent, the warnings multiplied against all who should have dealings with McCann, till at length he got an intimation from the firm at Dublin that they could no longer supply him. So that at the present moment a man, living seventy miles from Dublin, could not get a loaf of bread nearer than Belfast. He did not know how many Members of that House had ever read the columns of the *Longford Leader*—a paper owned by an hon. Member. He himself had studied the boycotting records of that paper for some months past. It had become the instrument of as cruel a persecution as he had ever known in all his experience of Ireland. Week after week it published the resolutions of the local branch of the League. In those resolutions not only was the offending grazier denounced, not only those who bought cattle from him or sold him oats, but also the man who met him in the road or at the fair and shook hands with him, the man who drank a glass of porter with him, the man who paid a debt at his house, the doctor who called on him; even girls were condemned in this boycotting record. The House might read in that paper what "crimeless Ireland" meant. The Chief Secretary would there find little material for criminal statistics; the boycotters had made a desolation and called it peace. The *Longford Leader* in its persecuting columns followed the life of the man whom it wanted to ruin with a cold and scientific cruelty.

Such was the explanation of the apparent peace which prevailed to-day in certain parts of Ireland. Criminal statistics told them nothing, and the question was not how much crime there was, but how much freedom. When comparisons were drawn between crime in England and crime in Ireland, one thing had to be borne in mind. In England crime was the act of individual offenders; in Ireland it was the outcome of a criminal conspiracy. Agrarian crime in Ireland sprang from boycotting and intimidation, and the boycott was organised by a group of men who worked it for political purposes and whose object it was to make penal acts which in themselves were lawful and honourable, and to visit with condign punishment anybody who disobeyed their tyrannous edicts. That was a distinction which made all the difference in the world. If he had to choose between fifty isolated crimes, however bad, by individual criminals and the organised tyranny found in Ireland, he was prepared to say that the fifty crimes would not be so dangerous to the community at large as one quarter of the number done under the inspiration of those who sought to make life impossible for the man who would not conform to their rule. He would be told that he was maligning his countrymen. Why should he love to blacken his countrymen's reputation? The people of Ireland were not criminal nor in sympathy with criminals, but Irishmen had not been able to stand up against criminal advisers. There were groups of local politicians who cowed into subjection public opinion in Ireland. He was convinced that such persons represented no section of the decent law-abiding people of Ireland, whether farmers or labourers; and yet they were able to make it appear as if the silent acquiescence of terror-stricken men meant sympathy with crime. It was not sympathy with crime, it was terror. And the deadly disorder had a further effect. In agrarian cases there were two tribunals: there was the Court of the League—that Court of criminal equity which never acquitted the innocent man, and there were the Courts of the land, which most rarely condemned the guilty. The Chief Secretary had said that as a Liberal he fell back on the ordinary law and was resolved to work it with vigour. Had he worked it in a manner likely to impress the people of Ireland with the belief that he meant to enforce it? In a speech at Belfast on November 22nd the right hon. Gentleman said the ordinary law of the land was the law which was enforced irrespective of the will of the Executive. It was the law over which he as an executive officer had no control whatever. They found, however, that in his administrative action he had exercised a dispensing power over it in favour of a certain section of law-breakers. The inciters to crime, the ringleaders, he refused to prosecute; and the Attorney-General took his orders from the Chief Secretary, and avowed it when on that occasion he pointed to the right hon. Gentleman and exclaimed—"There is my dictator." He would give one other illustration of the right hon. Gentleman's vigorous working of the ordinary law. Last April in Athenry a gang of midnight intimidators were captured in the act near the house of a grazier. They were brought before the resident magistrate, and sentenced to three month's imprisonment in default of giving bail for good behaviour. That was on the 5th of April. On the 7th the hon. Member for East

Mayo went to Galway and made a speech in which he said—

> "Please God, we will soon have them back again . . . I am confident that when the House of Commons hears from us an account of this transaction, the gates of Galway gaol will soon be thrown open to these young men."

The hon. Gentleman was as good as his word. The Chief Secretary remitted the sentence and released the men within fifteen days. Later on the Chief Secretary read a sharp lecture to magistrates on doing their duty; was his own example encouraging? Anyhow, there was no doubt as to the meaning put upon such conduct in Ireland. The act of the Chief Secretary was everywhere interpreted as indicating full and warm sympathy with the movement. "Heart and soul he is with us," said an hon. Member, and the sympathy was not during many months disclaimed by any member of the Government. While these men went on with their criminal action, silence fell on the Executive. The Chief Secretary recently said that in governing Ireland he must govern according to Liberal principles; and, on a previous occasion, that he must govern according to Irish ideas.

MR. BIRRELL: No, I did not. I do not believe I ever used that expression in my life.

*MR. BUTCHER said, if the right hon. Gentleman did not say so, it had been said by other members of the Government. Now the Irish ideas in accordance with which the Chief Secretary was governing—if he was governing according to any ideas at all—were not held by any responsible or intelligent men in Ireland. They were ideas which struck at the root of all civilised governments. Were these ideas consonant or not with Liberal principles? That was a very grave question. In other words had the alliance between Liberalism and Nationalism so impaired the principles of Liberalism that the arm of the law was paralysed, and that Liberals when they came into power had to make concessions to law-breakers such as no Government had ever done before. The Chief Secretary lately said that the Opposition cared not what disaster might happen to Ireland from the failure of land purchase; "what did it matter to them if only they could throw a little dirt at the Government." On the Opposition Benches there were men who did not care whether a Liberal Government rose or fell, or whether a transient Chief Secretary passed away, but who did care for the permanent welfare of Ireland, and saw in the right hon. Gentleman's administration a deadly blow to Ireland's good. He himself and his friends got many letters from persecuted men in Ireland saying they had appealed to the Irish Executive in vain, and that their last hope lay in an appeal to the House of Commons. There were, he was sure, on the Liberal Benches, many who, if they had the least conception of the tyranny now so widely prevailing, would break away from every Party tie, and go into the Lobby against their own Government. He did not believe that the sense of freedom and this sense of justice had died out in England, if only the true facts were known. He therefore appealed to the Government to do more than they had yet shown any signs of doing, to restore to the disturbed portions of Ireland the first conditions of Christian and civilised existence.

CAPTAIN CRAIG (Down, E.) said he rose with a full weight of responsibility to address the House upon the grave charges made against the Government, more especially after the charges which had been levelled against the Unionist Party by the Chief Secretary, at whose speech he was very much astonished. He considered that it was a cowardly speech. The Chief Secretary rose to answer the charge of the right hon. Gentleman, the Chairman of the Irish Unionist Party, and in beginning his speech said that certain members of the Unionist Party had, during the recess, made charges which were unfounded and untrue, and which he repudiated in the strongest manner he could. The party to which he belonged consisted of a small minority who represented in that House, not their constituents alone, but also many other men in Ireland who otherwise would be absolutely unrepresented. They had always striven to the best of their ability to sift most cautiously and carefully any statement made to them, although from time to time they had been hauled over the coals by the right hon. Gentleman. He was not at all disturbed by the sneering way in which the Chief Secretary referred to the Ulster Members outside the House, for if they had done nothing else, they had enabled a large number of men, women, and children in different parts of Ireland to have a more peaceful time when the House was sitting. Owing to a grave want of energy on the part of the Irish Executive, there was no regular law and order in Ireland, but when the House of Commons was sitting, by constant questions drawing attention to outrages, the police were stirred, and some sort of order was brought out of chaos. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman if that was not the case?

Mr. BIRRELL: No.

Captain CRAIG said that if that was not so, then the House was starting upon a session of grave responsibility, because those who had studied this question since the House rose, felt that, owing to a scheme that had been inaugurated, the Government had, to put it mildly, said to the people of Ireland, "Go on with your cattle-driving and crime; do what you think is necessary in order to impress Parliament with the necessity of dividing the grass lands, and the Government will support you." [Cries of "No, no."] Last session Lord Denman speaking on behalf of the Government said that the Government did not consider cattle-driving a very serious crime. Another representative of that Government had clenched the matter in Ireland by saying that cattle-driving did no harm. There they found two responsible Ministers at least making statements which were not contradicted by the Chief Secretary. The Government were persistently patting on the back all those who indulged in outrage. The hon. Member who was now confined for contempt of Court made a speech in which he said, "Parliament would, as it had often done before, ratify the good work that was being done." The legislation which had been forshadowed by the Chief Secretary appeared to him to be a fulfilment of the words of the hon. Member. It was awful to contemplate that that House was to be intimidated into passing legislation in order to get the right hon. Gentleman out of the difficulty of governing Ireland. They anticipated that something of this sort would occur, and when the House met they looked with anxiety to see the Home Rule members moving an Amendment to the Address. For some reason or other the method of attack had been postponed, and notice had been given by the Leader of the Home Rule Party that at an early date he would introduce a Motion which would have practically the same effect. The House had been favoured with sufficient quotations of actual crime as it had occurred during the recess, and he could support those statements by cuttings from Nationalist organs. He had in his hand the details of 185 outrages which had happened since the House rose, and they showed conclusively the class of conspiracy and intimidation which had been going on during the past few months. One quotation would show the length to which the supineness of His Majesty's Executive in Ireland had gone. The hon. Member for South Leitrim attempted to auction some meadow land, and no sooner had the auction been brought forward and held than he was summoned by the United Irish League to one of their meetings to answer for the horrible crime of having auctioned some of this meadow land. The evidence showed that Mr. Smith informed the League that he would be the last man to do anything of the kind if he had been notified, and if he had done anything wrong he had done it in ignorance; he was asked to give the names, but he declined to take the part of common informer. In other words—and this showed the power and extent of the vast organisation which had superseded the law in Ireland—when a Member of this House went across to carry out his ordinary avocations he was as subject to this treatment by the United Irish League as the most humble man living in those parts. He was exceedingly sorry to read in a paper that morning that boycotting had reached an abnormal extent in county Roscommon. In Ross National School, near Boyle, sixty pupils left in a body as a protest against the schoolmaster continuing on the roll and in attendance several small children, sons and daughters of two men living in the district. Cases of that kind had only to be brought to the notice of the House to show that the Government of the country as administered by the right hon. Gentleman opposite was in a deplorable state. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman to-night gave no hope whatever of his taking sterner measures with a view to justice being done, or that the persons and property of the people of Ireland would be made secure. He read another extract from a newspaper, dated 1st October, which stated that a series of outrages on animals had for some time been carried on in the vicinity of Ennis, and that the efforts of the constabulary to discover the perpetrators had been ineffective, the most recent case being the fifth of a similar character. The paragraph described the horrible way in which a calf belonging to Mr. Cunningham had been mutilated. That was only one of many cases which could be quoted, and the Chief Secretary instead of holding out some hope that more strenuous efforts would be made to deal with crime branched off into a long dissertation on the Land Act, and, as it were, smothered the issue which he and his friends wished to bring before the House. He held that no matter how beneficial might be the Bills the right hon. Gentleman intended to introduce this session, no right-minded man should sanction a single clause until the first elements of justice were brought into force in Ireland. It was not right that the right hon. Gentleman should ask hon. members on the Opposition benches to consider the mighty problem he had to deal with. It was not a matter of maintaining law and order this year or next, but a matter of laying the foundation on which law and order could be maintained in all futurity. The Chief Secretary had used some most extraordinary expressions. He had quoted Shakespeare as to the law's delays, but what would Shakespeare have thought of no law at all? The right hon. Gentleman both in the House and outside, was prone to branch into the lighter veinin all these matters. When the right hon. Gentleman spoke in Belfast he treated all these matters in an airy manner as though he were discussing the government of some foreign country or an academic question at college. It was no use to say that they ought to deal with facts. Those who lived in that part of Ireland where law and order was respected by the people had no desire whatever that the other parts should be reduced in any way or that they should suffer anything to which the people of the north were not subjected. He thought, however, that the Chief Secretary, in spite of his oft-repeated statement that minorities must suffer, should pay attention on some occasions to those in the north of Ireland who had built up great industries, made farming pay, and lived in peace, comfort, and quiet.

Attention called to the fact that forty Members were not present, House counted; and forty Members being found present—

Captain CRAIG said the Chief Secretary had referred in his speech to the constant anxiety of the Executive to rely on the ordinary law. The plea of himself and his friends was that the law should be administered in all parts of Ireland with the same security for personal property as in Mid Devon, Hereford and Worcester City. They warned the Chief Secretary that if he did not renew the Peace Preservation Act there would be trouble in Ireland, and they were immediately accused of gross exaggeration. He would ask any thinking man whether the results of dropping that measure had not been far more serious than the so-called exaggerations used from those benches. He feared that more disorder would follow. Was the Chief Secretary going to do anything? In Belfast, the right hon. Gentleman said he would not prosecute the hon. Member whom Mr. Justice Ross very soon brought to his senses, for fear he might become a national hero. He questioned whether the "national hero" would ever again have the same influence in Ireland. If the Chief Secretary had acted promptly, as Mr. Justice Ross did, instead of being cowardly in the matter——

Mr. BIRRELL: I could not do as Mr. Justice Ross did. I could only have brought him before a jury, which is not quite the same thing.

Captain CRAIG apologised for saying that the Chief Secretary ought to have done what Mr. Justice Ross did. He regretted the small powers Judge Ross had; he regretted exceedingly the small powers the Chief Secretary had in Ireland, or pretended that he had. If one of the "carrion crows" had been allowed to walk up and down preaching confiscation, he wondered what the right hon. Member would have done.

Mr. BIRRELL: That would depend upon the jury.

CAPTAIN CRAIG said it was too late for the Chief Secretary to shelter himself in a manner like that. They knew what could be done by those who had strength of mind and the courage to do it. Irishmen rather admired a strong Administration. It was only by the act of the right hon. Gentleman that that part of the country had been brought into the condition in which it now was.

*MR. STAVELEY HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford) said that in spite of the speech of the Chief Secretary, particularly that portion of it in which he gave as a reason for not enforcing the law of the country that there was some great panacea which he would bring in at some future time, he would say that in ordinary life when a person was ill and went to a surgeon, he was not put off with the remark that an operation was not necessary now because there was to be a wonderful cure invented before many years were over. They in England as well as in Ireland were concerned as to the present state of the people of Ireland, and the lack of foresight on the part of the Executive of His Majesty's Government in Ireland. Since the Liberal Party came into power, and also when in opposition, they had shown a peculiar friendship for those who did not obey the law. One could go back to the time when they expressed their sympathy with passive resisters, and then with the evicted tenants; and now the Government would not enforce the law in regard to cattle-driving. He would apologise; there was one exception. People might be shot at, cattle might be driven, houses might be fired into in Ireland, but the moment the timid suffragette gave a double ring or a double knock at a Minister's door the whole force of law and order was brought into play. That was the distinction between this and the other side of the Channel. He ventured to say that the Chief Secretary's description of what was going on in Ireland was not accurate. The Crimes Act had not been put in operation, but Ireland was now governed under antiquated statutes raked up from the reign of William IV., empowering the Executive to engage more police in certain districts, or from the reign of Edward III. When the coercion under the Crimes Act, which was successful, was suppressed they had coercion under an Act of Edward III., which was unsuccessful. The coercion of one statute was suited to modern times, the coercion of the other, it having been passed so long ago, was not. The Chief Secretary had emphatically denied the intention of ever bringing the Crimes Act into operation while continuing to apply the old statute which was supposed not to imply coercion, although under it a person might be tried by one Judge, while under the Crimes Act two resident magistrates was necessary. Under the old Act a prisoner could call no witnesses, but the Crimes Act dealt with certain cases which could only be tried in proclaimed districts. And there was one clause in that Act by which such offences as riot and assembly of persons to cause a riot, which were the concomitant of cattle driving, could be tried by the resident magistrates using the ordinary powers they had got if the Chief Secretary chose that it should be so. The hon. and learned Member for Waterford had made a speech which must have caused an enormous amount of surprise to hon. Members who knew the facts. In that speech the hon. and learned Gentleman showed that he did not take the trouble to read the ordinary reports of what was going on in Ireland. He said that not a single beast had been injured, not a single man had been attacked or injured in connection with cattle-driving, and that these demonstrations had gone on without bloodshed of any sort. The hon. and learned Gentleman evidently did not know what had been recently going on in the counties of West Meath, Meath and Galway. A policeman had been knocked down and rolled in the mud, and Sergeant Mann had been severely injured by the violence of the mob during a cattle-drive. Every hon. Member from Ireland would recognise that a policeman was a man. There were numerous instances of cattle being driven to their injury, and one man had been awarded £2 in court for the loss of a sheep which had had its legs broken. Then the Peace Preservation Act had been dropped for some reason or other best known to the Government, yet the Government had been bound to admit through the mouth of the Chief Secretary that there had been no fewer than 120 shooting outrages last year. There was no harm in the Crimes Act or the Peace Preservation Act being left on the Statute Book if there were no persons to be prosecuted under them. Then they had heard that night of a new principle: that juries had not to decide only whether a man was guilty or not, but whether the juries should be taken as the guides, philosophers, and friends of the Government as to what new legislation was to be passed. That was a new attribute to be given to juries. But the juries had not done their duty as expected. Time after time the Attorney-General for Ireland had said that they would do their duty, but it had been shown beyond all manner of doubt that juries could not be got to convict even when cases were taken to Dublin. In the summer and winter assizes, out of 229 persons tried, eight had been convicted, and the juries had disagreed in 156 cases. He supposed that in these 156 cases the Government had no guide as to what legislation there should be for the benefit of the people of Ireland. No one would deny that when the late Government left office Ireland was in a state of happiness, peace, and prosperity, but the Government had had to alter all that because it was necessary to do something for those who sat below the gangway.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.) said the Government, according to the results of recent elections, were rapidly losing their supporters in the country, and from the appearance of that Chamber at that moment, they were rapidly losing their supporters in the House, as there was not one single Member behind them to show their confidence in them in this debate. He supposed Ministerialists felt much more happy in flocking in at the sound of the division bell than in listening to the debates. He did not wonder at it, because he thought that the debate which had taken place that afternoon, had been more damaging to the Government than any other incident which had taken place in the last few weeks. He observed that the hon. Member for South Tyrone, sitting on the Government bench, smiled at that.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: It is not out of order.

MR. T. L. CORBETT: No, it was not out of order to smile, and it was rather pleasing to see the hon. Member smile sometimes. He could not imagine anyone who could speak in years gone by about this boycotting and crime with more force and fire than the hon. Gentleman before he left the faith which was then in him. He hoped the hon Gentleman would return to the old faith, though they did not particularly want him. The hon. Gentleman had always believed in the cult of the jumping cat, and now he saw what the country felt on the policy of the Government his flexible conscience might once more turn to the Treasury Bench under a new *regime* where he might have all the advantages he had enjoyed in the years that were passed. It was significant that the Nationalist Members should abstain from taking part in that debate. If they had deliberately done so, those who knew the ways of the House realised that it meant that there had been a deal between them and the Government. It meant that the Government had surrendered on the University question, and in consequence the Nationalist Members meant to abstain from giving them any inconvenience. The Leader of the Nationalist Party had not descended from his olympian heights to take part in the debate, but he spoke the other night and gave them his views on crime in Ireland. The hon. and learned Gentleman had many gifts as a leader and an orator, but he had not until then supposed him capable of a latent gift of humour, which was shown by the fact that he innocently and gravely in the face of innocent Members who did not know the state of Ireland assured them that there was no crime in Ireland. It might be a grim form of humour, but it was a form of humour. There was a time when the Chief Secretary for Ireland also chose to regard those crimes from a humorous point of view. He indulged in a wit which was very pretty in its proper place, but his levity had shocked even one of the Nationalist Members. This particular Member, quoting the Chief Secretary's remark that cattle-driving was a practical joke for young boys, replied that they were now about to show the Chief Secretary that it was not a joke. And they had shown it with a vengeance. The startling fact had come to his knowledge that afternoon that more revolvers had been sold during the last six months in Ireland than during the ten years previous. No doubt the fact would bear fruit, and when it did, it would have a powerful effect on that public opinion to which the Chief Secretary attached so much importance. But the Chief Secretary that afternoon, instead of the light levity with which he used to address them, seemed to him to speak with great bitterness and venom. He imagined that the Chief Secretary now knew his Ireland better than when he went there, and was beginning to realise that he was engaged in a dangerous game, that he was playing with fire, and that crime in Ireland was not a mere phantom conjured up by the Unionist Members, but a real conspiracy of crime engineered by all the worst elements of Irish life. After the answers the right hon. Gentleman had given that afternoon about the enormous increase of crime during his *régime*, he thought they should hear no more of those gibes and sneers at the Unionist Members who brought the matter to his attention for the first time last session, and warned him. He now realised that the present condition of things about cattle-driving rivalled the old boycotting days which used to be so thrillingly and glowingly described by the hon. Member for South Tyrone. If hon. Members believed that the state of crime was imagination on the part of the Unionist Members, he would refer them to the description of a most daring outrage perpetrated on a Sunday morning, given in a most respectable journal, the *Freeman's Journal.* He was sure that that fact would convince hon. Members opposite of its genuineness. He alluded to the shooting of Mr. Blake White, who had four shots fired at him while in chapel, where he had gone to Mass, one shot entering his hip and another his head—the latter it was feared would prove fatal, but he was happy to say it had not. The reason of the outrage was that Mr. Blake White refused to give up a grass farm. No arrests were made. The right hon. Gentleman had said that cattle-driving did not terrify him, but that the state of the stocks did. The right hon. Gentleman would be speedily relieved from his terror at the state of the stocks if he would realise that the maintenance of law in a strong and firm way would result in the stocks rising. The present state of the stocks was caused by deliberate mal-administration, by deliberate encouragement of crime, which would be greatly aggravated by the speech delivered that afternoon by the Chief Secretary.

Mr. T. L. Corbett.

*MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH (Fermanagh, N.) said that with that portion of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary which was addressed to the importance, to Ireland, of the maintenance of peace and the settlement of the land question in Ireland being dependent upon land purchase, he most thoroughly agreed. He had always thought the settlement of the land question was the only possible course to ensure peace and prosperity in Ireland. He had never hesitated to say so. The right hon. Gentleman this afternoon, however, seemed to be in too much of a hurry and proceeded in the course of his speech to imply a certain amount of blame to the Unionist Party because the Land Purchase Act did not get on any faster. The right hon. Gentleman clamoured in one part of his speech for the transference of untenanted land to small occupiers by compulsion, but in another he admitted that it was only a question of price, and that the landowners of the South and West were willing, anxious, and eager to sell. He did not think the right hon. Gentleman had given due consideration to the fact that the landowners of Ireland were agreed that it was only a question of price and that, though they were most willing to sell, the difficulty was not to find an eager vendor or a willing purchaser but to find the money with which to pay. The Chief Secretary for Ireland had told the House that only £19,000,000 of purchase money had been distributed up to the present, but at the same time he admitted that the sales at present pending before the Estates Commissioners amounted to £34,000,000 in addition. It was surely then unjust to blame any person in Ireland for unwillingness to sell, or to suggest that land purchase in Ireland had been in any way retarded or unduly delayed. It was difficult to see how land purchase in any country where the land to be purchased was estimated to cost £150,000,000 could be accomplished in so short a time as five years. The success of the Act had been very great, but it really would be impossible to imagine that the rest of the land question of Ireland could be settled in less than another period of five years, and he regretted to say he believed a much longer period. But why were they to remain in a state of anarchy and disorder during the length of time which was sure to elapse before the land purchase of Ireland could become complete? That there was plenty of untenanted land in Ireland ready for sale everybody knew. The only questions were where was the money with which to buy it and whether the man who sold it would get approximately the same interest for his money as he derived from his land. There never had been any unwillingness to sell tenanted land, and the same remark applied to that. The remarks made by the Chief Secretary were very interesting and he had listened to them with the deepest attention, but the right hon. Gentleman had seemed to speak to the House on a subject which, though they all took a deep interest in it, was not the subject matter of the Amendment. It was only in the latter and lesser portion of the right hon. Gentleman's speech that he dealt with the subject matter of the Amendment, which was the maintenance of law and order in Ireland. It was not necessary to discuss the apparent diversity of opinion between the Chief Secretary and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, expressed in a recent speech, as to the cause of the difficulty of maintaining law and order in Ireland; because whether it was the difficulty of getting a jury to convict or the difficulty of getting evidence on which to prosecute it came to the same thing—namely, that it arose not from the sympathy of the jury, or those who might give evidence, towards the offenders, but from the fact that both jurors and witnesses knew that if witnesses gave evidence, and the jury gave a verdict, according to their oath, the consequences to themselves would be very serious. He had had considerable experience with juries in many counties of Ireland, and he knew the way in which they looked at this matter. On the whole, juries in Ireland were perhaps more favourable to prisoners than in England, but at the same time he had seldom seen any reluctance on the part of a jury, where a case was clearly proved, to find a verdict on the evidence. Right down to 1906 he could not recall a case of which he had any personal knowledge in which the jury found a verdict that could be said to be not in accordance with their oath. As late as the year 1905, thirty-seven persons in Galway were convicted at one Assizes of intimidation in respect to grazing farms. That was practically the same offence, and with the same motive as cattle-driving, but carried out in a different form. Large bands of men marched either by day or by night up to the houses of farmers and threatened them and pressed them to give up their farms. A number of those men were tried and convicted by juries, and he believed they would be convicted now if the jurors were sure of the fact that the law would be upheld and that they themselves would not be subjected to outrage in consequence of their verdict. The juries were composed, generally speaking, of law-abiding men who had no sympathy with crime and who only wanted to be allowed to go about their business quietly, and who knew they would not be allowed to do so unless crime and outrage were suppressed. But once intimidation became rampant in the country, once young men of the villages—mostly young men of bad reputation—got on the ramp, and thought they could do what they liked, then farewell to the independence of juries in Ireland. The jurors might be good and decent men and anxious to do their duty, but in many cases which came under his observation they were also thoroughly frightened as well as decent men. He had many times been interested to hear Crown counsel exhorting juries to do their duty and find a verdict according to evidence. But counsel after the case was over went away to his lodgings with a police orderly behind him and left the town next day. The Judge, having sentenced the prisoners, left with an escort of cavalry, and also left the town next day. But where did the jury go? They went back to their shops in the small towns or to their farms on the lonely hill-side; those houses which they knew would be fired into at night if their verdict displeased the local agitators. They knew that their cattle would be mutilated, their walls broken down, and themselves perhaps assassinated. He was himself a great admirer of trial by jury, which in many cases was infinitely more just than trial by Judge, but there were circumstances under which trial by jury not only became a farce, but a cruel farce; not only cruel to the victims of unpunished crime and outrage, but to the persons put into the jury-box—persons living in the lonely country side and asked at great risk to do their duty, and then not protected for doing it. It was no doubt a great pity, but once a country was allowed to get into such a state as that, where was the sense of asking men to do their duty and find a verdict, especially when it was known that if they did they would be boycotted, or worse? Were these men, very often small tradesmen, going to stand that? Were they going to see themselves ruined and their wives and children sent to the workhouse, the League newspapers publishing their names in the list of the boycotted day by day? Acquittals acted as a danger signal sometimes. when the Executive was going too strongly against the conscience of the people, but that was not the state of things in Ireland to-day. Jurors had no liking for the cattle-driving or outrages. Juries did not find verdicts now, because they were too frightened to find them. If the Executive enabled the jurymen to feel that their lives, their property, and their houses were safe, they would do their duty as ordinary citizens as well as ever they did. The Chief Secretary thought it was a terrible thing to have to enforce the Crimes Act. Though he was a great believer in trial by jury and would like to see it prevail, what did the talk of coercion all come to? It came to this, that there was a general Act which provided for justice being done when trial by jury broke down. What did the police magistrates in London do to-day? Did they not try cases involving imprisonment and long imprisonment without a jury. He read every day of men being sent to gaol for six months and six months on top of that, cumulative sentences, and all this done without a jury, and the conscience of the people was not offended. The Crimes Act of 1887 provided in effect that where in certain cases, only, trial by jury broke down, the resident magistrates might try a man and send him to gaol for six months. If it was not wrong for a Justice of the Peace in England to send a man to gaol for six months without a trial by jury, why should it be wrong for the resident magistrates in Ireland to do so? An ordinary magistrate in England or Ireland could send a man to gaol for six months for a number of offences, and the resident magistrates, it should be remembered, were obtained from an enormous field of selection, which enabled the Chief Secretary to get the very best men in the British Empire if one might judge from his amusing account of the methods of choice, and men far above the ordinary J.P. in legal knowledge. If he could not use the powers he has under the Act of 1887, it was of no use prosecuting men if there was going to be coerced disagreement among the jury, and the existing process was merely effective for getting disagreement at best. It was rather demoralising that jury after jury should be exhorted to do justice in a case, and that a man should be tried perhaps two or three times over with the absolute certainty that the very best result they could get would be disagreement. The Chief Secretary had made a very resolute statement that he would not use the Act of 1887. That rested with the right hon. Gentleman; but he would be glad to hear as regards the ten years which must elapse before anything like a complete settlement of the land question could be effected, whether the right hon. Gentleman proposed to go on with the present system of trying men before juries who, he knew, dared not convict, where only the boldest dared to hold out and not agree to a verdict of acquittal. Sooner or later some other means would have to be tried, for the longer disorder went on the worse it would be. Personally, he had some experience in districts in which there had been disorder. It always began in a small way. To take one district as an example. First of all, some men were prosecuted for an unlawful assembly, and they were bound over to keep the peace. They would not give security, and were sent to gaol for three months in default of bail under the Act of Edward III. The Chief Secretary let them out in three weeks, or a very short time afterwards. The same men were prosecuted for cattle-driving, and in the evidence given on their abortive trial it was sworn that they shouted: "Come on, boys; we have the Government at our backs; King Edward III. is dead, and three months only means three weeks." With this beginning the whole district was in a most lawless state now. These men were cattle-driving, not because they were farmers who wanted land and thought it an expedient way of getting it. They were not farmers at all; they were the loafers of a country town. Some more effective way of dealing with such men must be found than that of bringing them before a jury who would be carefully intimidated before they got into the jury-box; and, if a more effective way was not found he shuddered at what would be the condition of Ireland during the years which it would take to work out the land question, a settlement of which all in Ireland most anxiously wished to see arrived at as soon as possible.

MR. GORDON (Londonderry, S.) said that Irish Unionist Members came to the House of Commons to put before it what at all events they felt to be a great grievance. It was not very encouraging to find that the Chief Secretary, who showed very little courage when dealing with matters in Ireland, once he got into Parliament could rely not merely on the three big battalions, the Radical, Labour, and Nationalist Parties, but could also rely on their support whether they had heard one word of the discussion or not. He did not think that it spoke very well for the representatives of England and Scotland, or for the Nationalist representatives from Ireland, that they should be content simply to come in to vote and take no intelligent interest in what was going on, or in hearing what was to be said on the question. It was not a trifling matter. The Unionist representatives had come to that House to ask that Parliament should express its opinion in favour of the observance of law and order in Ireland. It was no light matter that the Chief Secretary, who was the official responsible for the preservation of law and order in that country, should stand up in that House and make such a speech as they had listened to that afternoon—a speech of the most extraordinary character that, he thought, had ever been delivered in that House. What did the right hon. Gentleman do? He began by giving them a long statement about land purchase, and by dragging that topic across the track of the subject which the House was asked to consider. The right hon. Gentleman had argued about a matter which he knew thoroughly well, or ought to know, was not of immediate concern to the subject under debate. The right hon. Gentleman knew, or ought to know, that the Unionist Members from Ireland were just as keenly anxious that this land legislation should be carried out successfully as the right hon. Gentleman or his supporters—in fact rather more so, because those who were in the House in 1903, when the Land Purchase Bill was before them, and who were supporters of the late Government, knew that they were getting very lukewarm support from the Radical Party who then occupied the Opposition Benches. The Radical Members of that time were too much inclined to take the cold economic view of the situation. Now, when it suited the right hon. Gentleman to try to throw dust in the eyes of the Irish people, and of those who had to deal with the question in that House, he began a long tirade about land purchase, as to which they were, as he had said, as keenly interested as the Chief Secretary. They knew the figures just as well as he did. What was the right hon. Gentleman's idea in doing it? His first idea was to blind the Members of the House of Commons to the true question they had to deal with; and his next was to carry out the proposition which he propounded a few weeks ago at Reading, that it was some interference of the Unionists with land purchase that was the cause of the trouble in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman dared not go so far in that House, and his statement had no justification. The right hon. Gentleman had said that that was the great matter before him. He would like to know whether the preservation of the rights of property, and the freedom of action within the law of His Majesty's subjects, were not things far more important than those other matters to which the right hon. Gentleman had referred, however important those matters might be? They were all satisfied of the importance of land purchase, but the first and most important thing they must have in any civilised community was the observance of the law, the preservation of life, and the protection of property. This they demanded from the Government. The right hon. Gentleman's next mode of dealling with the matter, after devoting a quarter of an hour to something which had no immediate concern with it, was to offer an excuse for criminal conduct in Ireland. Thatwas the way in which his speech would regarded by the law breakers in Ireland. Let there be no mistake about it. In the opinion of every independent and unprejudiced man that must be the true meaning of what the right hon. Gentleman had said. He went on to explain that they must look at the source, at the meaning, and at the character of the crime, and that if they could provide a remedy they were not to punish the criminal. What was the source? It was disappointed hope. Supposing the Socialist Party in England came to the conclusion that the poor ought to have divided among them the property of the wealthy and well-to-do. That would be the source of their crime if they put their wishes into action by taking the property of their neighbours. The right hon. Gentleman, he supposed, would say they were to take that into account and not punish them because, forsooth, they had disappointed hopes; they had thought the Radical Party would pass a measure equally distributing all the capital in the country. Therefore, the man who broke into his neighbour's house and took his money was not to be punished, because the source of his crime was to be found in disappointed hopes. Then the character of the crime was to be considered. Did anyone mean to say that individuals who fired into houses in which people lived, at people who were going about their own business, at people who were standing at their own doors—as an unfortunate schoolmasterwas a few days ago—at men going to discharge their duties at public meetings, and at people going home from places of worship, were not to be punished or kept in order because the source of their crime was a greed and hunger for land and a desire to get it at all cost? What about the firing of hayricks and houses and the burning of cattle in their stalls? A grazier down in Meath had 200 tons of hay burnt, a shed destroyed, and thirteen cattle burnt to death in their stalls. Were not these things crimes? With regard to the next class of crime—cattle-driving, the Leader of the Irish Party when he was driven to the wall and had to speak about it in England after some speeches that had been made by the Chief Secretary said—

> "Well, it may be a sort of technical breach of the law."

It was something that nobody was to take any notice of. The members of the Government minimised it and said it was of very small account and hardly crime at all. The other day a County Court Judge had to deal with cattle-driving in West Meath, where the land was fit for nothing else but fattening cattle. Fifty-nine fat cattle had been taken out of their the pens and driven about the country, and County Court Judge had to give a very substantial sum for the damage caused to them. In plenty of places cattle had been driven off and injured and lamed. In one case a foal had its leg practically cut off. The tails of cattle had been cut and they had been otherwise mutilated. The authors of these crimes were not to be punished, because they came within the definition of classes of crime that the right hon. Gentleman thought deserved no punishment. It was not pleasant for an Irishman to deal with these matters. They might not see eye to eye with the Nationalists in political matters, but all parties ought if they possibly could to see eye to eye in matters that pertained to the peace, honour and material prosperity of their country. The right hon. Gentleman told them that all this was brought about because the hopes of these people were disappointed, and they had not got hold of the grazing lands. As far back as April last year the right hon. Gentleman's attention was called to these cattle-driving cases, and he was kept continually informed of what was going on, and the way he met those who informed him was merely by flouts and jeers and by heaping opprobrious epithets upon them. He took no notice of the matter and allowed it to go on, and it went on. Then when he was forced to speak about it, he minimised it as much as possible, and, as he said in a speech at Southampton, it was simply that somebody opened a gate and the cattle wandered out on the roads. Was that an accurate way of stating what occurred? The right hon. Gentleman had set his heart on land legislation. He did not think he yet understood Ireland. He was very far from doing so or he would not have taken that course. In a speech on 7th November the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "If only the Irish people will maintain a very strong desire for the land and give every possible encouragement to those who in the Imperial Parliament labour in that direction the problem will be settled."

What did that mean? Those who wanted land, if they would only keep it up and give great encouragement, "I will give them what they want." What was the interpretation put upon it by the gentleman whom he allowed to go about the country preaching this doctrine which he himself seemed to have desired should culminate in legislation? The hon. Member for North-West Meath a few weeks afterwards said—

> "Mr. Birrell has lately made a number of very long speeches not all consistent with each other. But in Dublin, addressing an audience mainly Nationalist, he applauded our strong desire for the land, asked us to give him every help and encouragement, and promised that the British people will do what we want if called upon with sufficient courage and energy. When translated into common language that meant 'apply the hazel to the ranche cattle with all your might.' We have travelled far in a few months and have now reached the time when the people living near a ranche are ashamed if they have not yet had their drive. Ashamed they ought to be because their courage is in question, because no ranches will be broken up but those that are stripped and kept stripped, because men who take the risk of scattering cattle must be given the best bits of land."

That was not merely the policy which the right hon. Gentleman had been advocating or had been understood to advocate, but it was the policy which he had advocated that night in the House. It was the policy which every line of that speech taught to a quick-witted people. The same gentleman went on—

> "Knowing my advice to be just and necessary, I have openly given it and helped to put it in practice, and will continue to do both. I openly advise the universal and unceasing use of the hazel until the ranches are sold to the Commissioners for distribution, I openly advise you not to allow either bullocks or police to take rheumatism from want of exercise. If any rancher has the impudence to plead that he has agreed to take land for another year the only possible answer to such a deliberate public enemy is to drive his cattle oftener, further, and faster than any other. Follow him to fair and market and make it impossible for him to buy or sell without police assistance."

That man was allowed by the right hon. Gentleman to go on in the course which he was pursuing. If he had misinterpreted him, why did not the right hon. Gentleman have him up and proceed against him as he could have done? Why should he wait and attack the poor unfortunate men who followed the advice which they believed to be given them by a Minister through a Member of that House? Why did the right hon. Gentleman wait until these men had committed offences which they were told they ought to commit, and for which they were told the reward would be that they would get the best bits of land? The right hon. Gentleman allowed him to go on, and expected that intelligent juries in any part of Ireland, with the knowledge that the Government was allowing the inciters to go about the country scathless, without any attempt either to stop them or make them amenable to justice, would convict the poor, wretched, ignorant people who acted upon such advice. It was not fair to the juries in Ireland. Was it surprising that under the circumstances they failed to convict these men when the Government and executive authority would not put upon their trial the men who had actually misled them into the belief that they were doing the work of the Government, and who were allowed to go about the country stating that they had certain members of the Ministry at their back in the matter? It was really wonderful to what length Ministers would sometimes go when they found themselves in a difficulty. The right hon. Gentleman had told them that in the first case that was tried in Dublin there was a conviction, and that in all the other cases there were either disagreements or acquittals, and the cause to which he assigned this was that the Judge did not sentence the first batch. What was the fact? The Judge did at the end of the trials sentence those who had been convicted to a moderate term of imprisonment and the others were subsequently brought back again to Dublin and tried, and again the juries either acquitted or disagreed. One would think that they were children or that they had not been living in the country and did not know what was going on. Such an argument as that in support of the idea that juries would convict if they had known the punishment which the Judge would award to those who had been convicted was too childish. This was the way in which matters had been progressing in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman first took no notice of what was going on. It grew, and then he minimised it. Then he made speeches in which, whatever he intended, his language was capable of a meaning which for a long time he did not open his lips to correct. He had left the same impression by his speech that night. They were entitled to better treatment than that in Ireland. But there were other places in Ireland where there was a public opinion and a certain amount of freedom of action. English and Scottish Members did not know as well as they in Ireland knew the working of the United Irish League. It had its branches all over the country, but in the North there was a vast population who were perfectly law-abiding and orderly, and who would not be terrorised by the League and who therefore afforded protection to the people amongst them who might in other places be under the thumb of the United Irish League. In the South and West it was different, and there the right hon. Gentleman had allowed the law of the land to be supplanted by the law of the United Irish League. He wondered if Members knew the way in which the business of these branches was carried on. They summoned before them some member of the community who had done something that they disapproved of. He was tried and sentenced. The sentence might be that he must apologise, that no person was to work for him, or that no one was to supply him with any articles of food or necessaries of life. Those sentences were carried out, and the people were often driven to give up their property. The people were coerced and forced by the terrorism which existed to obey the dictates of these unlawful tribunals. The newspapers published accounts of the proceedings of these tribunals just as if they took place in a Court of law. What under these circumstances could these poor unfortunate people do? That was the kind of thing which went on in Ireland. Were they to be told that that was a state of things which ought to be allowed to continue? Were they to be told that because these people had been disappointed and had committed crime they should not be punished? What satisfaction was that to the loyal quiet people who had committed no crimes and who had to suffer through this terrorism? No doubt hon. Members were aware of the case of the unfortunate Brady who had to go twenty miles to get food, and whose family, when returning with food, were set upon by a mob and had the food taken from them. Brady had three farms, and he had been forced to give up two of them by the tyranny of the United Irish League, and it was very doubtful whether he would be able to keep possession of the third farm. It was idle for the right hon. Gentleman to tell them that this was a case of disappointed hopes. He had always understood that the law was made to be obeyed. If the law was bad then it should be reformed, but it should be obeyed first. The right hon. Gentleman told them about the action of juries influencing legislation. They all knew of the large number of non-convictions by juries for stealing goods of small value because of the terrible punishment that would follow, but when the punishment was changed juries did not refuse to convict of the crime of theft. But the present argument meant that the British House of Commons was to allow violence and crime to go on unchecked because on the first two or three occasions when the Chief Secretary and the executive officers had endeavoured to have persons convicted the juries had either disagreed or acquitted the prisoners. The right hon. Gentleman was now arrogating to himself the right to put the law in force against one man and not against another just as he pleased. If a man committed a crime it was not for the Chief Secretary or the Public Prosecutor to say: "We will prosecute A but we will not prosecute B, because there is some question of political policy involved. He understood that all men were equal in the eyes of the law, and all law breakers ought to be proceeded against if they disobeyed the law. But what had the Chief Secretary done in the speech he had just made? He had set himself to apologise for crime and to excuse the criminals. They had had in the past bad times in Ireland, and most of them were old enough to remember passing through very critical periods, but they had always found an attempt at any rate on the part of the Irish Government to administer the law and uphold it. It was left for the present Chief Secretary, to have the law of the land degraded and brought into contempt, to allow it to be flouted and despised in every corner of the country where the United Irish League held sway. That was not a state of affairs upon which the right hon. Gentleman could be congratulated. The evil should have been grappled with first, and if changes were found to be necessary then they could have been made in a legitimate manner, but the law ought to be enforced. Surely the Government had no right to disregard the wishes and opinions of those who desired protection for life and property, a desire which had been evinced by a large section of the population in Ireland. The wishes and opinions of the loyal minority had as much claim to consideration as the wishes and opinions of the United Irish League. In coming over to manage the affairs of Ireland the Chief Secretary seemed to think that the only thing he had to do was to look after one Party and take all his cues from them, utterly disregarding the wishes, opinions, and statements ot fact made by the other Party in Ireland. By the adoption of such a policy the right hon. Gentleman had achieved a success which was unique, for he had brought a country which he said himself only a year ago was quieter than it had been for the last 600 years to a worse condition than it had been in tor the last twenty-five years. [Cries of "Oh, oh!"] At the present moment terrorism existed in Ireland and the Government had allowed the arm of the law to be paralysed. The people had come to see that they could not get the protection of the law and they had to remain silent in the face of the village tyrant and the United Irish League and their oppressors. It was idle to say that even this large increase of crime in any way adequately indicated the real increase in crime and the actual state of terrorism which existed in Ireland. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not act in the way his speech seemed to indicate, and would not leave matters to take their course until he was able to bring forward a new measure to deal with the land question. There was no Member from Ireland who would not help the right hon. Gentleman in anything he could do in the way of providing means to have the Act carried out; but on the other hand to say that more land legislation was required was no excuse for the country being in the state in which it has been during the past year.

MR. WILLIAM O'BRIEN (Cork): My observations to-night are not intended to weigh one way or the other in English party politics, but after listening to the speech of the Chief Secretary to-night, full of high courage and love of freedom, I fancy the most candid Members must have made up their minds that this debate will do more discredit to the Unionist Party than it will either to Ireland or the Chief Secretary. I am afraid it is doing no violent injustice to the organisers of this Amendment if I suspect that they were not so greatly concerned about the distracted state of Ireland as about the distracted state of the Unionist Party, and that in casting about for something with which to reunite the Party they have fixed upon Ireland as the scapegoat of their English politics. I do not accuse the mover of the Amendment, or any other British Member, of any design to do injustice to Ireland. On the contrary, and the pathetic thing is I am sincerely convinced that, according to their lights, they are all friendly to Ireland. But the tragedy of the thing is that so long as Englishmen will persist in governing a country they do not understand, and never will understand, the moment one English Party gets on the right track, it seems to be a sort of patriotic duty of the other Party to obstruct and baffle them even when they are only carrying out their own policy. It is the high crime, apparently, of the Chief Secretary that he has dropped the Coercion Act in the governing of Ireland. But so did the Unionist Government and not merely in 1900 under Mr. Gerald Balfour, but also in 1903 under the right hon. Member for Dover and Lord Dudley. That was the secret of the most successful time the Tory Government ever had in Ireland. The right hon. Member for Dover and Lord Dudley had the courage, and I think it is to their everlasting credit, to cancel every proclamation in Ireland under the Coercion Act. They appointed Sir Antony Macdonnell for the express purpose of doing what the right hon. Gentleman is now charged with doing, namely, governing Ireland without the Coercion Act and without jury packing. Members above the Gangway ought not to forget that it is under the influence of the good feeling that was created in Ireland by the abandonment of coercion at that time that the Unionist Government undertook the revolution, which no doubt might have still great elements of anxiety as to the future, but which I make bold to say, if it is only bravely followed up by the two Parties, will yet be recognised as the greatest and most beneficial work throughout all the centuries since Englishmen undertook the task of looking after Ireland. The Chief Secretary quoted speeches by the right hon. Member for Dover. If those speeches had only been incorporated in the Act of 1903 and worked out in administration, we should never have heard of cattle-driving, and there would not be a voice raised above the gangway for the resuscitation of the Coercion Act. We fought for fair play for the Unionist Chief Secretary then as we are fighting in Ireland now for fair play for the present Secretary for the reason that he is doing precisely the same work of governing Ireland without coercion, and he is striving, as the right hon. Member for Dover did, in the midst of many difficulties, to settle this tremendous problem of congestion in the West of Ireland. The mournful thing is, here is a question which ought to be recognised by Members of both sides as a question which should silence all Party interests, and upon which both Parties ought to be unanimous and magnanimous in dealing with one another and with Ireland. The Member for South Dublin said that the Government started with some tremendous advantages in Ireland and gave some gentle hints of what we pretty often hear, that after the right hon. Member for Dover had dropped coercion he revived it and accomplished some mysterious miracles in Ireland under his iron rule. It was absurd to imagine that the right hon. Gentleman did anything of the kind. What he and his law officers did was to obstruct and to whittle away some of the most useful provisions of the Act of 1903. As a matter of fact, he repressed no disorder in Ireland because there was no disorder worth speaking of, and what he did was to create the maximum of irritation and disappointment as to the working of the Purchase Act, with a minimum of anything like usefulness. The secret of the great trouble we are discussing is that the right hon. Member for South Dublin handed over to his successors a country that was seething with legitimate discontent and disappointment after the total failure of four long years to apply the remedial measures of this Act, to the very portions of the country where there was the sorest need of a large and courageous application of the Act and a prompt amendment of it wherever it was found to have broken down. When the right hon. Gentleman left the country the congested district clauses had been rendered absolutely void, and after he left the country he disposed of his last chance of reliability in advancing Irish affairs. I respectfully submit that it was the Member for South Dublin who failed in Ireland, and I have no hesitation in saying it is the present Chief Secretary who has succeeded so far as it is possible for any Englishman to succeed in that utterly baffling and impossible office. We have heard a lot of rubbish about cattle-driving in two or three dozen parishes in the whole of Ireland. I tell you that if the Chief Secretary had followed the methods of Mr. Justice Ross and of the right hon. Member for South Dublin it is not in three or four Irish counties, but in fifteen or twenty Irish counties you would have cattle-driving, and perhaps something a little more serious. Yes, and you would have these gentlemen asking you to undertake another twenty years of firm and resolute government to put it down, and you would fail as you failed in 1887, because now, as then, you would have every Nationalist representative of Ireland united to a man against you. We have heard an explanation, although it was a very subdued one, of the right hon. Gentleman's success in discouraging cattle-driving in Ireland. I think his speech has disposed of the theory of some mysterious corrupt bargain. I know of no bargain except the right hon. Gentleman's published speeches, manfully stating his political life and his intention of doing his honest best by Ireland. So long as he is true to that pledge, we shall do our honest best to help him. The reason why cattle-driving has so nearly disappeared that we scarcely hear of it, and that every other form of disorder has disappeared in Ireland is, to my mind, due to the fact that the Chief Secretary has, for the first time, manfully and impartially administered the ordinary law and trusted the people of Ireland and their representatives for the enforcement of law and order. There is no use in disguising the fact that in Ireland for a long period the very name of law and order was detested, and justly detested, as an instrument of injustice and wrong. For the first time in the history of the country the present Chief Secretary has taught the Irish people that there may be such a thing as their own law and order which it is their own interest to enforce and obey. I think it can be truly said that he has succeeded in making the Irish people their own peacemakers to an extent which, if the framers of this resolution would only rise above paltry Party interests, would induce them to offer to the right hon. Gentleman a Party vote of thanks instead of a vote of censure. I do not, however, expect that they will. But they will find by-and-bye that they are wrong in this as they have been wrong every time when they put their own wisdom against that of the representatives of Ireland. I will not deny that there have been many instances of abominable crime, but I do say that the Ireland depicted by such rhetoric as that of the hon. Gentleman who has been addressing the House is no more the country we know and live in than one would recognise England if we read in the Press of France or Germany that the wife-beaters and burglars dealt with by the London police force were perfectly fair specimens of the British people. We have never attempted to mislead this House as to the truth with regard to Ireland. We have never pretended that there was peace in Ireland when there was no peace, and there ought to have been no peace. A time there was when it would have been a crime on our part to have cried peace; and every statute passed by this House for twenty-five years has proved that we were right, and that hon. Gentlemen above the Gangway were wrong. We do not deny that there are very serious remnants of the old trouble surviving; but why? Simply because you did not in this House in 1903 make the Land Act what the competent representatives of the landlords and tenants united to ask that it should be made. The congested districts clauses of that Act were amongst the last in a very voluminous Bill, and they were hustled through this House in a single night without adequate discussion or amendment. That was the secret of the whole breakdown. The trouble is still there, but only if the House is wise, if only the people of England are wise, these troubles may be very easily dealt with. But if the storm can be awakened again, and I do not deny that it can—[OPPOSITION cheers]—Yes, but it can never be awakened except by the foolish and short-sighted spirit of Amendments like this. It is foolish and it is wicked to give such pictures nowadays of the country we live in and know as the most peaceful and least criminal on earth. We hear of your generalities, but what is the use of talking about anarchy and bloodshed as if a man's life in Ireland was not worth twenty-four hours' purchase, when, after twelve months of most cruel excitement, you cannot point, fortunately, to one single instance in which human life has been lost? Then, as to property. I have some right to say it, and I am not ashamed to maintain that the propertied class in Ireland have been treated by their fellow countrymen with a generosity which I suspect their English brother landlords must regard with envy. Even the graziers have been so richly compensated that it is very seriously doubted indeed whether they do not regard this agitation as a very mixed blessing. I would impress hon. Members for Britain to remember that this whole trouble is owing to the disappointment of the people of Ireland at the defeat of the purposes of the Act of 1903, to the baulking of the people up to the present time of reforms which both parties in the House recognise to be just and necessary—one of which is a mere question of two or three years' purchase. There is one thing that sometimes makes me despair, and that is the incredible depths of ignorance in the English mind owing to the deplorable attitude of a certain influential section of the English Press as to the state of Ireland. I am not much of a believer in or an advocate of the policy of the "big stick" in the affairs of any nation, but if there were any real need for coercion as between England and Ireland, I think a beginning might well be made by hanging the writer of the Irish editorials in *The Times* newspaper, who would deserve such a fate all the more because I understand he is an Irishman, and, therefore, ought to know better. Three-fourths of the grotesque hallucinations as to the present state of Ireland are due to the ignominious fact that certain London journals hard up for copy last winter selected Ireland as a topic for abuse, and as their seasonable sensation. All the ingenuity which is usually devoted to the elucidation of such questions as "Is marriage a failure?" was this winter turned loose upon unfortunate Ireland. The mare's nest discovered by London editors hard up for copy is the sum and substance of this whole wretched debate which has been only lighted up by one ray of intellectual brightness. Before I sit down, if party feeling is not too angry, and in spite of the party interest of the moment, I would respectfully appeal to the higher and truer spirit of men in both English Parties, who I sincerely believe to be friendly to Ireland. Though it would be quite useless to suggest on this particular occasion that instead of going into opposite lobbies, they should combine to go into one lobby and acknowledge that the Chief Secretary means to do good to Ireland—that is useless—I would ask hon. Members above the gangway, if they must see this Amendment through the division lobbies, not to forget, in view of the great questions raised in the speech of the Chief Secretary, that there are new and hopeful elements in this Irish problem which, if Englishmen on both sides of the House will only rise to the height of dealing with them in a proper spirit, may in our own lifetime yield happier results both for themselves and Ireland than were ever before produced in their dealings with Ireland. The mass of the Irish people, I say it without hesitation, are most heartily desirous for peace with their Unionist fellow countrymen, as well as with the people of England, Scotland, and Wales, with whom they never had any quarrel. They have given remarkable proofs that they mean what they say. I entreat hon. Gentlemen not to let exasperation come out on your side, nor to let this wicked, detestable spirit curse a weaker nation. The only peacemakers will not be the gaolers and the policemen in Ireland, but, in the first place, the Irish people themselves; and in the next place, the determination on the part of the present House of Commons to do justice, promptly and generously, to Ireland. What it has already been recognised ought to be done is to convince our people in Ireland that this Parliament will redeem the debt they contracted to Ireland in 1903, and which you have not redeemed to one-fifth part, and make it clear to those of our countrymen in Ireland who have not yet come to realise all the good disposition there is here to Ireland—to make it clear to them that without cattle-driving or class hatred, this Parliament is prepared to pass fresh legislation promptly to amend the Act of 1903. That will have to be done sooner or later if the land of Ireland is to be turned to the best advantage for the people, whose only desire is to go back to the land and live by it. I wonder whether it ever strikes Englishmen that the head and front of the offending of the poor people in the West of Ireland is their desire to get back to the land? That is the very virtue you credit the people of England with; you are offering premiums and subsidies in England to encourage that return to the land which in Ireland is to be hounded down as a crime. I do not make any predictions of any approaching millenium in Ireland, but complicated and difficult as the task of the Chief Secretary is, there are elements of promise present in the Irish situation, such as no English Statesman has ever had to deal with. It is because the Chief Secretary has stood to his guns like a man and, while administering the ordinary law impartially, has some confidence in trusting the people and their representatives to be their own peacemakers, that he has to an almost marvellous degree succeeded, and I for one, hold that he is entitled to the thanks and not to the censure of this House. If the present position is taken advantage of, the peace which now exists between the Government and the Irish Party, will prove to be an instrument for passing into law those great measures which every responsible statesman of both Parties must now acknowledge in his secret conscience, to be just, urgent, and inevitable.

*MR. GUINNESS (Bury St. Edmunds) in a maiden speech, said that in the course of this debate the House had listened to the most astounding statements as to the present state of law and order in Ireland. The hon. Member for Waterford had said, when speaking on the main question the other day, that compared with periods of political excitement in Ireland in the past, the present state of that country might be said to be absolutely crimeless; while that afternoon the Chief Secretary had told them that there had been 381 cases of cattle-driving up to the end of last year. He did not think those figures gave them a true idea of the real state of affairs, because in the last few months of the year cattle-driving had been far more rife than it had been in the first period of 1907. Might he remind the House of the figures given by Judge Curran in addressing quarter sessions at Trim only last Friday? He gave the figures of cattle-driving in County Meath alone as ninety-three in the last five months. Now if there were only 381 cases in the course of the whole year for eleven counties, surely that showed that cattle-driving had been very greatly on the increase in the closing period of the last year. He thought the explanation of the favourable comparison which was made between Irish criminal statistics and English criminal statistics by hon. Gentlemen on the Nationalist benches was that they had a very different idea of what constituted crime from English Members. The hon. Member for Waterford, speaking in South Wales a couple of months ago, said that cattle-driving was merely a technical breach of the strict letter of the law, and that no one could call an offence of that description either an outrage or a crime. It was important to remember when they heard these glowing accounts of the law-abiding state of Ireland that hon. Gentlemen on the Irish benches did not look upon cattle-driving as a crime. It was impossible to make any comparison between lawlessness in Ireland and lawlessness in England, because they could not go on the number of convictions. During the recent summer assizes, during the winter assizes in Wicklow, Cork, and Limerick, and during the Michaelmas sittings of the Court of King's Bench, Dublin, the total number of prosecutions for agrarian offences was 237, and out of that number eight convictions only were obtained. He would ask the House to look at the figures of convictions shown in the statistics of British crime. If they took the statistics for 1906, the last that were available, they would find that of all the criminal offenders committed for trial only 17½ per cent. were acquitted, and yet in Ireland, for these agrarian offences in the period he had just mentioned, no less than 96½ per cent. of prisoners were acquitted. That showed what these Irish juries were worth. They had heard from the Chief Secretary that the chief object of juries was to show what the people of the country were thinking, and he supposed the right hon. Gentleman would have had the satisfaction of learning from those figures what the people of Ireland thought of British law, and that they considered it as a matter to be held up to scorn. How could they in these circumstances compare the figures of crime in Ireland with the figures of crime in England? They all knew that by nature Irishmen were a law-abiding and moral race, and if it were not for the political agitator, there would be far less crime in Ireland than England. [Mr. W. REDMOND: "There would be far less crime but for stout."] The question here was as to agrarian crime, and surely, in judging the effect of crime on public security, they must allow less weight to the petty theft of the pickpocket, who shunned the light of day and the knowledge of the police, than to the organised action of a body of perhaps 2,000 men, who came with menaces in broad daylight, perhaps with three or four brass bands blaring and making a boast of their lawlessness. Nobody could by statistics get an idea of the state of Ireland any more than they could get an idea of the state of an unsettled country like Macedonia, by inquiring as to the number of those who had recourse to the civil tribunals under Turkish law. People did not apply to the Law Courts in Ireland, because they knew they would not get justice. They knew that it was waste of time to appeal to Irish juries, and that if they did so they were only laying themselves open to intimidation and outrage. The Executive had so long allowed breaches of law and order, they had so long permitted British law to be flaunted with impunity, that it was natural that people should no longer rely on it. It was natural, that when every plaintiff knew that far more serious punishment would be meted out to him by a conspiracy of his fellows than a weakly administered British law would visit on men who had wronged him, that he should not have recourse to that law. The criminal statistics failed to show the greatest blot on the administration of justice in Ireland to-day. They did not show how an irresponsible organisation could dispose of the property and liberties of law-abiding citizens. [A NATIONALIST MEMBER: "Tell us something about the Crown jewels."] The United Irish League brought illegal pressure to compel men to abstain from doing that which they had a perfect right to do, and the present system of lawlessness had under the present Government so long continued that they could not hope for any improvement, except by extraordinary measures which should absolutely crush this conspiracy of disorder. If only the Government would put into force the Crimes Act, sworn inquiries under Section 1 would destroy the conspiracy of silence which protected criminals from detection; and Section 2 would make it possible to bring proceedings against those illegal conspiracies which compelled men to give up their legal rights. The Chief Secretary had told them that afternoon that the source of disorder in Ireland was disappointed hopes, and the hon. Member for Waterford stated during the debate on the Address that cattle-driving was a mere symptom of the evil which lay at the core of the land system in Ireland. Even if they granted that premise, was that any ground for their allowing this symptom to become so aggravated as to threaten the safety of the whole organism? The fact that the Government was going in for a general treatment was no reason why they should not have recourse also to a local treatment. They could only hope for a satisfactory solution by showing a firm intention to check disorder, at the same time trying to remove those causes which perhaps had originally led to its breaking out. But he did not believe that cattle-driving was an unprompted outbreak of disorder resulting from the land system in Ireland. Possibly the Irish Party might think that they could blackmail the present Government. He would not say that there was not a good deal of wisdom in their course of action, because they all knew that those who were conscious of the weakness of their position were very apt to give way to that peculiar form of pressure. He thought it was even more probable that the true reason of this outbreak of lawlessness in Ireland was the desire of the Nationalist Party to crush the spirit of those who were withstanding their persecution. The hon. Member for Cork gave the true indication in the interview he accorded recently to an American journalist. The hon. Member then said that he was afraid there was a section of the Irish Party which believed that continued disorder in Ireland was a necessary lever to obtain Home Rule. The real motive of this organised persecution was to drive from the country those who would fain live under the sanction of British law, or to compel them to make peace with their enemies and enjoy the protection of organised terrorism. So long as the Government allowed this sort of thing to go on, the task of governing Ireland would be made more difficult, because it drove into the arms of that disloyal party, men who for years had stood out against their intimidation; but who eventually found it easier to take sides with the party of disorder. They found that they were losing their business; that they could not carry on their industry; that their neighbours shunned them; that they could get no protection from British law, and they were finally compelled to take sides with those who were the bitterest enemies of this country. Meanwhile, the prosperity of Ireland was suffering.

MR. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): Is not Guinness's paying?

*MR. GUINNESS said that capital was like a sensitive barometer, and shrank as soon as political and economic conditions became threatening; and the progress of Ireland was being delayed, while the agitator was allowed to stir up disorder, which made it impossible for the industries of Ireland to obtain the capital they needed. What conceivable benefit was Ireland going to get by that separation, which was the real object of the cattle-driving campaign. The British investor had seen quite enough of mob law in Ireland under His Majesty's Government to teach him not to invest in Irish undertakings, if the Nationalist Party ever got permanent control of the destinies of that country. This was not a local question only. It was a question which opened up the whole problem as to whether the confederacy of British States should develop within the British Empire or outside. They could not expect the Colonies to stick to England if Great Britain became the vulnerable country she would become if she allowed Ireland to break away, and if she allowed a hostile and angry population to command the lines of communication towards the west. The Irish loyalists believed that the Irish nation could hope for very much more from its British connection than it could if it were to become an independent nation. They believed that far greater prosperity awaited Ireland by her sticking to her British connection than by independence, and they appealed to Great Britain to check, before it was too late, that conspiracy of disorder, the aim of which was to make British rule in Ireland impossible. They realised that the difficulty was the greater owing to the party system of government in force in this country. If the legislative union between Ireland and Great Britain had been established, as was the union between England and Scotland, before the party system of government had become stereotyped, the Irish question would have been dead and buried many years ago. Parliament had made the mistake time and again of condoning disorder and buying it off in order that it might get a short reprieve from the worries of Irish agitation. Unfortunately the success of these agitations in Ireland had engendered an unhealthy appetite which had grown by the sops upon which it had been fed, and there was a party in Ireland which believed that if it could only make the administration of the law sufficiently difficult and unpopular, the Liberal Party would be induced to change it. The Irish loyalists appealed to Great Britain before it was too late to put a check upon the lawlessness in Ireland, to vindicate the law and prevent British rule from becoming a by-word for incompetence and weakness.

MR. BELLOC (Salford, S.) said he owed a certain apology to the House for intervening in the debate. He did not represent an Irish constituency, and holding the opinions on the subject which he did, he thought it was absurd for any member representing an English constituency to speak upon the question of Ireland. Those who had spoken on behalf of the very small and at present disunited minority of Ulster stood in another category and had a right to speak. But while he apologised for speaking upon the subject, he considered he had a better right to do so than at least two hon. Members who had intervened. He was bound to confess that if he had not been informed of the fact by his friends he would never have known that the hon. Member who had just sat down was an Irishman. The particular accent with which the hon. Gentleman intoned the English tongue was the very accent which he had himself acquired from long association with the governing classes of this country, but the hon. Member's way of looking at the matter betrayed, not a knowledge of Ireland, but just so much Irish blood as was contained in that small disunited minority. He, however, had this right to speak. He represented an English constituency which like many others, contained a very large Irish population—a far larger Irish population than was contained in the delightful constituency of Bury St. Edmunds. Those who sat as representatives to some extent of the Irish population of the English industrial towns in the North had that right, and only that, for intervening in that debate. Strong as his own feelings were in the matter he would not have spoken at all were it not that a considerable body of Irish opinion had sent him to the House; for it was not, in his view, for an English representative to speak upon the domestic affairs of Ireland at all. If the younger Members of the House below the gangway intervened at all, perhaps the best use they could make of their interference with a body of men so many years older and with so much more experience of affairs, would be to say that in their mind the Opposition could not have raised a point more idle, more futile, and more unreal than that which they had raised that evening. When he heard the hon. Member for Cambridge University speak of the land-hunger and the rest of it, he seemed to remember the days of his boyhood, when those questions were the burning ones of the drawing-rooms and he was at school. He assured hon. Members opposite that that sort of thing was as dead as ditch water, and they would never win an election upon it. He did not suppose there were 300 suburban voters of the most suburban constituencies who cared one snap of the fingers whether the Irish people were governed efficiently or not, either by the British Government or by themselves. But when it came to the mass of the English people of the great industrial towns of the North there was not one constituency in fifty in which the vast majority of the electors were not in favour of self-government for Ireland. Until hon. Gentlemen opposite understood that they were not fitted to speak on this question, and when they understood that, they would go in a block for tariff reform. It was curious how much out of touch men could get with great populations. Did hon. Members opposite really seriously think that in Manchester, Leeds, Huddersfield, or Liverpool, or in any of our great industrial towns they would move the working-men, who were thinking now of old-age pensions or whether their food should be dearer or not or whether they were to be given better conditions of employment, by talking of cattle-driving? He was astonished that men who after all attached some importance to the political game should be so much out of touch with the public opinion of the country. The old Unionist game was no longer of any interest to the English people. They were indifferent to it. When the masses read in their newspapers the course of that debate, though they would read with great interest what was said by Irish Nationalist Members, they would not listen to any of the arguments or read a single speech of the small and disunited minority of the Irish Unionists. If hon. Members thought otherwise they had one very simple test which they could apply. Let anyone who represented a suburban constituency compare the effect of discussing this question with the real and vital issue of the economics of the future. There was one reason —and the Conservative Party knew it— which had made all the enthusiasm and interest upon their side decay, and it was financial. Until the passing of the Land Act of 1903, imperfect as they made it by bad statesmanship, the great financial interests of England, the cosmopolitan finances of the world, were to some extent connected with the whole question, but at present they were indifferent to it. There was perhaps no wiser thing said in the wise speech of the Chief Secretary which they all applauded and followed with interest, than when he said that one of the functions—he did not know whether he said it was the most important function or no—of a jury was to inform the Executive of popular feeling upon certain matters. This had seemed to certain Members a curious doctrine. He would recall to their minds the trial of Dr. Jameson by jury. If he had not been convicted, would any Government have been strong enough to order a new trial? That was what a jury meant. This pretence of failing to understand was all on a par with their presupposing that either there was no such people as the Irish people, or that if there were it was a very bad thing. Those who listened to the Chief Secretary's speech with emotions that were not those of Party and to whom the question whether this or that would go down with a particular set of voters was indifferent, felt that one note at the end of his speech was very true. It was one of those notes so seldom heard in party politics, and one which when heard had something of the tone of a bell. It was when the right hon. Gentleman said, courageously and well, that he was known to be in favour of the government of Ireland by the Irish people. With that the majority of the House was most certainly in sympathy. It was not the policy of the present Government, but that House, and the English people in a great measure, were in sympathy with it. There was no political point on which they had, if slowly, been more thoroughly converted; and if hon. Gentlemen opposite consulted their constituencies he was perfectly sure the last jaded remnants of the old Unionist cry would die. When they approached their constituents they would do so on the economic question, and on that point they would be defeated.

*MR. CHAPLIN (Surrey, Wimbledon): The hon. Member who has just sat down has given us many instructions as to the course which it is desirable that we as a Party should pursue on this side of the House. I notice that he at all events believes the great majority of the Party on his side of the House have reverted to their original love for Home Rule. I remember the time after the last general election but one when a vast number of Members on that side of the House, or others who represented them, entirely changed their opinions on that point. Many of them found salvation for the most part by announcing that whatever else happened nothing would induce them to look at, much less consider, Home Rule during the present Parliament. I suppose that in the years that have elapsed since then the hon. Member and his friends have found some encouragement which leads them to a change of opinion. I do not quite know where they find it. The hon. Member says he finds it in the North of England, where, he tells us, there is not a considerable constituency which is not heart and soul in favour of Home Rule.

MR. BELLOC: What I said was there was not one you could fight upon that issue.

*MR. CHAPLIN: That is a distinction without a difference. But why does the hon. Member limit his observations to the North of England? He has had ample opportunities of late, and, unless I am very ill-informed, he will have further opportunities very soon of ascertaining the opinions of voters in other parts of the country. I heard of an election the other day in Mid Devon. That has been followed by another, and the present Member for the constituency (South Hereford) will, I hope, take his seat in this House very shortly. These elections do not give any encouragement to the belief that the constituencies of this country have come round, are converted and are prepared to support Home Rule. They lead me to believe exactly the opposite, that Home Rule will be found as unpopular as ever when you go to the country at the next election, whenever you dare do so, and I think you will postpone that event as long as you possibly can. It leads me to believe that Home Rule will be as unpopular as tariff reform will be popular—by which I confidently believe as well as hope that the Liberal Party will be swept out of existence at the next election. It appears to me that this debate to-night has been of a rather peculiar character, and I propose, as far as I can legitimately do so, to confine myself strictly to the Amendment. That Amendment condemns the Government for allowing disorder, open, daring defiance of the law practically, from day to day in large districts in Ireland, to continue without any real, determined effort to put a stop to it. When I speak of a real and determined effort to put a stop to it, I mean that the Government cannot be said to have taken that course when they have either neglected or declined to use the means which are ready to their hands and which have been proved over and over again by experience to be the only real and effective means of dealing with lawlessness and disorder in that country. The debate has largely turned on remedial legislation. I shall be glad and ready to have something to say upon that whenever the right and proper time comes. The hon. Member below the Gangway said the real truth of the situation was that my right hon. friend the Member for South Dublin had failed, whereas the present Chief Secretary had admirably succeeded. Now, what is the test of success? What is the test we can apply to the success or failure of these two different Ministers? What was the condition of Ireland when the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary succeeded to his office? He has stated it most emphatically, and I cannot do better than quote to the House his own words. The right hon. Gentleman, speaking at Halifax on 27th April, 1907—I have taken this report from the *Freeman's Journal*, and therefore it is quite certain to be correct—said this —

> "You take my word for this, that Ireland is at this moment in a more peaceful condition than for the last 600 years."

In saying this he pays the highest possible compliment to the success of my right hon. friend who is held by the hon. Member for Cork to have failed where the right hon. Gentleman has succeeded. But he went further. He said—

> "I have not got a predecessor in office living, and there are many of them, I am pleased to say, who would not recognise that my lines so far have fallen in far pleasanter places than theirs."

Therefore the fact is that the right hon. Gentleman succeeded to his position in Ireland under more favourable circumstances than any Chief Secretary either I or he or probably any Member of this House can recollect. I am sorry to say anything that may sound disagreeable, but what is the condition of Ireland to-day? I have told the House what the condition was when the right hon. Gentleman succeeded to his present office. I believe he has held it rather less than a year. He has told us this afternoon that there are many causes of disquietude and it is to him a subject of constant and most grave anxiety. I can well understand it. I have read all the recent reports coming from Ireland day after day and ever since I came into Parliament, which was when Mr. Gladstone was first beginning his great Irish policy. I have watched with care and anxiety everything happening in the country, and I can well understand and I believe it to be perfectly true with not one iota of exaggeration, that since the right hon. Gentleman succeeded to his office, since the adoption of the policy he has pursued in Ireland with regard to the maintenance of law and order, the condition has totally changed, and that even he finds it at the present moment to be a subject to him of the gravest and constant anxiety. And he has evidently found serious difficulties in this condition of affairs for himself. He dealt with the question of congestion in Ireland to-night, which weighs, as he told us, most heavily upon him. I can understand it, and what is more I sympathise with him thoroughly and truly upon this point, because I recognise what everybody who has ever studied the question of Ireland and given thought and attention to it has known for the last forty years and even long before then; that which lies at the real root of all the difficulties in Ireland at the present time and always has done ever since I can remember is the intense land hunger in that country. I am surprised that the right hon. Gentleman, knowing and feeling this as he does, should take Mr. Gladstone and the great measures which he proposed and carried, and the great policy which he pursued—I am surprised that, knowing what he does of the subject himself, he should take Mr. Gladstone as his example and propose to follow again the same kind of policy that he did, because I remember that from 1870 downwards one after another they have all of them ended in the greatest and perhaps the most ignominious failure, as the results of great legislation, ever propounded by any statesman. [" No."] My hon. friend (Mr. T. W. Russell), who worked with me in perfect accord for many years, says "No." Let me take the Act of 1870 to begin with. Why, I remember that Act's being introduced. I remember as well as if it were yesterday the ringing tones with which that great Minister told the House of Commons that by his great scheme of Land Reform which at that time was entirely new, he desired "to close and seal up for ever if it might be" this great question so vitally affecting the welfare of Ireland. No doubt, when he said it he believed it as truly and conscientiously as I have not a doubt the right hon. Gentleman will believe in the efficacy of the measure he tells us he is going to propose very shortly for the same purpose and probably in the same direction. What happened with regard to the Act of 1870? Within less than twelve years after it had become law that Act was found to be so totally inefficient that Mr. Gladstone himself recommended a Royal Commission to reconsider the whole question of the condition of Ireland and what was its recommendation? That this Act should be ignominiously repealed, and repealed, if I remember right, I think it was; and its place was taken by another Act, the Act of 1881, in which I may observe in passing that the Minister who has been taken as an example embodied all the great principles or the chief of them, and notably above all others the valuation of rents, the very thing which he had opposed tooth and nail in 1870, and which he had absolutely demolished and destroyed by columns of argument which were unanswered and unanswerable then and have never been answered by anyone, even by himself, from that day to the present time. Then there was something else after that. That Act of course led to the creation of dual ownership, and in that respect it was as great a failure as the Act of 1870, because from that day to the present it has been the object of all parties in this House to get rid of dual ownership created by the great measure of 1881 and by the Land Purchase Bills which have been submitted to Parliament from time to time, and some of which have been carried. But why did all these great measures fail? They failed no doubt partly because of their own demerits, partly no doubt because they were not well adapted to the situation, but above all they failed because one and all of them were neither more nor less than concessions to violence and lawlessness and to disorder in Ireland; and every time a measure was wrung from the Radical Government or Governments of those days by lawlessness and disorder a lesson was taught them that they could always read. And what was that terror? Why, that almost anything they desired they might obtain from the weak Radical Governments, afraid of losing their support, at any time they pleased to be sufficiently disorderly and lawless in Ireland for the accomplishment of their purpose. I am not—I hope I never shall be—forgetful of the conditions of Ireland, the position in which many of the population are placed, and as far as I am concerned I would always be ready and glad and willing most fairly and impartially to consider any proposals that are or can be made for the real amelioration of the conditions of that country that are consistent with justice and with fairness to others. What must always be borne in mind in connection with this question is the root cause of all these troubles. That, as I have already said, is the land hunger of that country. Yes, but what produces that land hunger? One hears this spoken of as if the owners of the land, the landlords of Ireland, were the people who were to blame or who were responsible for this. It is absolutely nothing of the kind. Those who will take the trouble to read the history of Ireland and carefully study all the causes of its present condition must be perfectly well aware that it is owing to totally different causes, and the real truth is that the fact of there being this great land hunger in Ireland arises entirely from the population of that country, perhaps 200 years ago or more, having been driven back entirely to the land for the means of their existence and support because of the bitterly selfish, commercial, criminal policy of England in former days. [AN, HON. MEMBER: "Protection."] Yes, protection; but for whom? Protection for the class whom I see so often largely represented on the Benches of that side of the House, namely, the representatives of the great manufacturers of this country. But the Irish landlords had nothing to do with this. They were not to blame. And now how do you propose to make reparation for the evil done in those days? Not at the cost of those who were responsible for it, but of one class and one portion of the community in Ireland and that class alone. That is the position at the present time. The right hon. Gentleman tells us he is going to do nothing whatever unjust to the landlords. He says that after all they are ready and anxious and willing to sell their estates. It is only a matter of price. Yes, but how is the price to be settled? It is not a question of bargain. It is not what they are willing to take, because the one thing you insist upon above all others, so I understand from the legislation that has been threatened, is compulsion, and everybody knows that if land is to be taken by compulsion under the provisions usually enacted by Radical Governments with regard to Ireland the landlord will be obliged to take the price he can get, not the price that his land may be worth—the price fixed by valuers all over the country, who would probably lose their employment altogether if the price was not satisfactory to the purchasers. While of course I believe everything that the right hon. Gentleman tells me, I certainly shall have some suspicions on this particular question until I see the provisions of the Bill which he is going to lay before the House. With regard to what I was saying just now about Ireland, it was not always so. In former days, many years ago, unless history is absolutely in the wrong, there was no country more prosperous or more flourishing than Ireland was at that time. I spent at one time of my life, before the commencement of Mr. Gladstone's Irish policy, many months in the country, going to every part of it, and I think I made myself as fairly acquainted as any outsider could expect to be acquainted with the general condition of that country. You could see then, in any number, the ruins of old mills driven by the exceptional water power in Ireland, all destroyed in the most barefaced manner as regards the woollen and other trades, all the trades in fact except the linen trade, and destroyed, as I say, by the selfish commercial policy of this country. Therefore, whatever remedies you may propose for the conditions of Ireland, if you desire to act fairly the burden of these remedies ought not to fall alone on the shoulders of the owners of the land in that country, but on those also who were directly responsible for it.

And, it being Eleven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

Adjourned at Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 4th February, 1908.

EARL OF CLANWILLIAM.

Report made from the Lord Chancellor that the right of Arthur Vescy, Earl of Clanwilliam in the Peerage of Ireland, to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland has been established to the satisfaction of the Lord Chancellor; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

FAIRFAX PEERAGE.

Petition of Albert Kirby Fairfax, claiming to be Lord Fairfax of Cameron in the Peerage of Scotland; that His Majesty will be graciously pleased to cause his right to the title and dignity of Lord Fairfax of Cameron, to be declared and established; together with His Majesty's reference thereof to this House. Presented (by Command), and referred to the Committee of Privileges to consider and report.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Hurly's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. A Bill intituled an Act to dissolve the marriage of Honoria Hurly with Maurice Randall Hurly, a Major in the 93rd Burma Infantry, her now husband, and to enable her to marry again, and for other purposes. Presented (on petition), and a copy of the proceedings in and of the decree of the King's Bench, Matrimonial Division of the High Court of Justice in Ireland delivered (on oath) Bill read 1ª; and to be read 2ª on Tuesdav the 31st day of March next. The usual orders made.

Hurly's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. Petition of Honoria Hurley that the depositions of Ella Morrison, Estelle Hamilton, Ada Norris, and Thomas Harold Mortimer Green may be received in evidence on the Second Reading of the Bill; and that a duly attested copy of the Bill and the Order for the Second Reading thereof, and the usual Orders of this House may be transmitted by registered letter to Rodway Charles John Swinhoe, Solicitor, of Mandalay, Upper Burma, and that the attendance of the said Rodway Charles John Swinhoe before this House to prove personal service of the Bill and Orders be dispensed with, and that an affidavit of the said Rodway Charles John Swinhoe, of such personal service sworn before the Legal Commissioner or a Justice of the Peace for administering oaths be deemed good and sufficient proof of such service. Presented and ordered to be taken into consideration on Friday next.

Ammanford Urban District Council Water Bill [H.L.]; Audenshaw and Saddleworth Urban District Councils Bill [H.L.]; Bristol Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Briton Ferry Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Camberwell and other Metropolitan Borough Councils (Super annuation) Bill [H.L.]; Herne Bay Pier Bill [H.L.]; Huddersfield Water Bill [H.L.]; Keighley Corporation Bill [H.L]; King's College, London (Transfer) Bill [H.L.]; London and District Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.]; London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill [H.L.]; Magee Presbyterian College (Londonderry) Bill [H.L.]; Malvern Hills Bill [H.L.]; Merthyr Tydfil Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Monmouthshire County Council Bill [H.L.]; Ravensthorpe Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Skegness Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Swansea Valley Gas Bill [H.L.]; Thames River Steamboat Service Act (1904) Amendment Bill [H.L.]; Upton Town Hall Bill [H.L.]; Wath-upon-Dearne Urban District Council Gas Bill [H.L.]; Presented, and read 1ª.

Barry Railway Bill [H.L.]; Bognor Gas Light and Coke Company Bill [H.L.]; Commercial Union Assurance Company Bill [H.L.]; Llanelly Gas Bill [H.L.]; London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Bill [H.L.]; Northern Assurance Company Bill [H.L.]; Norwich Union Fire Insurance Society Bill [H.L.]: Pontypridd Water Bill [H.L.]; Rhymney and Aber Valleys Gas and Water Bill [H.L.]; Stratford-upon-Avon, Towcester, and Midland Junction, Evesham, Redditch, and Stratford-upon-Avon Junction, and East and West Junction Railways (Amalgamation) Bill [H.L.]; presented; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

Minute of the Committee of Council on Education in Scotland, dated 4th

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

February, 1908, providing for special grants in aid of certain School Boards in Scotland.

LIGHTHOUSE ADMINISTRATION (ROYAL COMMISSION).

Report of the Royal Commission on Lighthouse Administration. Vol. I. Report.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

THE LISBON MURDERS.

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (the Marquess of RIPON): My Lords, I rise for the purpose of moving that your Lordships agree to an address to His Majesty the King; and I am quite certain that this proposal will receive the unanimous approval of your Lordship's House. There are many precedents for a course of this kind. Similar addresses were presented in the cases of the King of Italy, of President Carnot of France, of the Emperor of Russia; who were assassinated and also, in days yet further back, in the case of President Lincoln of the United States. If there were many reasons for presenting such an address on those occasions, there are in some respects yet stronger reasons for doing so on the present occasion, because those who have been the victims of the atrocious crime which was committed last Saturday at Lisbon were close allies and intimate friends of this country. The ties which have bound Portugal to England during a long period of years have been so close as to render everything connected with that country a matter of great interest to us. We know also that there has been during the same period a friendship existing between the Sovereigns of Portugal and of this country of an intimate character, and that alone would render it our duty to present an address to His Majesty the King. But, apart from those considerations, which would themselves have been amply sufficient to justify the Motion, there are in this particular crime circumstances of horror which have sent a thrill throughout the world, and which have called forth, I may say, almost unanimous condemnation. Such a crime, I am happy to think, is almost unheard of. It was an attempt to destroy, not an individual, but a whole family, an attempt under the most cruel circumstances and of the most wicked description, and it was accompanied by characteristics so deeply moving as to attach to it a special degree of interest. For, my Lords, we must all have noticed the high courage and noble bearing of the Queen of Portugal, as she stood there endeavouring to shield her sons from the bullets of the assassins. It was not only that upspringing of a mother's love we must remark, but we have also to observe that under a loss almost unparalleled in the history of mankind, she rose from her sorrow, from the side of the corpses of her dead husband and son, and walked forth, calm and noble, to take her place in the councils of her country, and to ask from the councillors of Portugal assistance for her young son. That is enough to call forth the sympathy of any Assembly in the world; and I am quite sure that it will move your Lordships unanimously to agree with the proposal I have to make. Then, my Lords, look at the touching words which were addressed by the young King of 18, who had just witnessed the murder of his father and his elder brother, to his State Council:—

> "I am without knowledge or experience. I place myself in your hands, counting upon your patriotism and wisdom."

I think, so far as we can judge, that that confidence of the new King is not likely to be misplaced, and I hope that, as God brings so often good out of evil, there may arise in that kingdom a happier and more satisfactory state of affairs. I beg to move.

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty to convey to His Majesty the expression of the indignation and deep concern with which this House has learned the assassination of His Majesty's ancient ally and friend, His Majesty the King of Portugal and the Algarves, and of His Royal Highness the Duke of Braganza; and to pray His Majesty that he will be graciously pleased to express to His Majesty the present King on the part of this House their abhorrence of the crime, and their sympathy with the Royal Family of Portugal and with the people of that country."—*The Marquess of Ripon.*

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My Lords, upon this occasion, the noble Marquess gives utterance to feelings entertained not only by those who sit with him, but to those of the whole House. I can add but little to the eloquent words which have just fallen from his lips. The terrible crime of Saturday last has created a feeling of consternation throughout the whole of the civilised world. It was attended by circumstances of horror and pathos for which it would be hard to find a parallel; and in this country the universal emotion has, I venture to think, been even more deeply felt than in other parts of the world. Portugal, as the noble Marquess reminded us, is an old and trusted ally of this country, connected with us by immemorial ties and by centuries of reciprocal goodwill. The late King and his gracious and illustrious Consort were well known in this country, respected and liked by all who had the good fortune to meet them. The King possessed many qualities which endeared him particularly to us, qualities of manliness and of unaffected good humour, for which he was conspicuous. The Portuguese Royal Family are connected with our own Royal Family by ties of relationship and by ties of the closest intimacy. My Lords, we cannot hope that anything we can say or do will have the effect of lightening the heavy burden of sorrow which has fallen upon Portugal and the Portuguese Royal Family. We can only offer our deep sympathy, first to the illustrious lady who as Queen is mourning for her husband, and as mother is mourning for her son. We can offer that sympathy to the Portuguese Royal Family, upon whom this calamity has fallen so heavily, and to the Portuguese nation, upon the annals of whose history a dark and unfortunate page has been inscribed. Last of all, we may offer our sympathy to our own Royal Family, to whom we know this deplorable event has occasioned the deepest anguish. Our sympathy is all we can offer. We offer it with the utmost respect, and with all our hearts.

On Question, Motion agreed to *nemine dissentiente*. The said Address ordered to be presented to His Majesty by the Lords with White Staves.

BRITISH INDIANS IN THE TRANSVAAL.

*LORD AMPTHILL rose to call attention to the treatment of British Indians in the Transvaal and to move for Papers The noble Lord said: My Lords, I have left the Motion which stands in my name upon the Paper in spite of altered circumstances, because I ventured to think that it would be desirable that the compromise which has been happily arrived at between the Transvaal Government and the Indian community in the Colony should not pass unnoticed in Parliament. I am sure this House will desire, by a consensus of individual opinions, to congratulate the Transvaal Government on their courageous and statesmanlike action. I say that the action of the Transvaal Government was courageous because the concession was offered at a time when it required the highest degree of moral courage to make it. I say it was statesmanlike because by it the statesmen of this young Colony have demonstrated their appreciation of the cause of Imperial unity, and have recognised that Imperial considerations are paramount and above the local interests of the Colony. We may also congratulate the Indian community in the Colony on having obtained the concession for which they were willing to sacrifice so much. Surely the courage, unanimity, and consistency with which they have pursued their end are not less admirable than the moderation which has never failed them and the modesty with which they have put forward all their demands. To us as an Imperial race it cannot but be gratifying that our Indian fellow subjects should have learnt from us and have adopted that which is best in our political methods, that they should have such a high sense of what is due to their individual and their collective dignity, and that they should so sincerely value that liberty which we in this country consider the birthright of every man.

We may also congratulate His Majesty's Government; and I do venture so to congratulate them, on having escaped a great danger, the danger of being held responsible for a vital injury to the Empire at large, and of a mortal affront to His Majesty's loyal subjects in India. To that extent we may congratulate them. and I only wish—and I say so quite sincerely—that we could also congratulate them on having themselves brought about this fortunate compromise, a compromise which comes as a relief and gives the greatest satisfaction to all men and all parties in this country.

The question which I should like to ask your Lordships to consider in connection with the Blue Book which has just been issued, and I hold that the issue of a Blue Book by His Majesty's Government at the very opening of Parliament is an invitation to comment and criticism on their policy, is whether it was inevitable that the Government should have allowed such a situation to have arisen as that which existed in the Transvaal Colony a week ago. What was that situation? Briefly it was this—200 British Indians were in gaol, thirty had been ordered to leave the Colony, twenty more had been warned, three were in the Chinese goal, and 13,000 of His Majesty's loyal Indian subjects were prepared to sacrifice everything that men hold valuable in life, their personal prospects and worldly possessions, and to face even exile and actual starvation, rather than sacrifice their individual and communal self-respect and submit to a law which they regarded as humiliating and oppressive. They were men of all classes, men of high culture and men of lowly station, barristers, merchants, Government officials, soldiers who had worn the King's uniform and gained war medals; men who hold a large stake in the country, and whose property amounts to many thousands of pounds sterling; men who had served the country in the Ambulance Corps of the Boer War and Natal Rebellion. Such were the men—and many of them had been over twenty years in the Colony—who regarded this new law as tyrannical and intolerable.

It is asked by some whether they were reasonable in this view, but that is a question which I will not detain your Lordships by discussing, for no one who has made himself at all acquainted with the subject can doubt that the Indians were reasonable in their objections to these regulations. We have, moreover, the declarations of successive Ministers of the Crown in this country that the disabilities and restrictions which were imposed on the Indians were such as could not be regarded as fair and just in this country. That was the situation in South Africa, and there was also a rapidly-growing feeling of indignation in India which culminated in the great meeting at Bombay, where we beheld the unusual spectacle of Hindus, Mahomedans, and Parsees united in one common object of protest, and headed by such a man as His Highness the Agha Khan. Those who are acquainted with India will know the significance of the fact that the Agha Khan, who is a power in the Mahomedan world, not only within the confines of that vast dominion, but also beyond the shores of India, should have placed himself at the head of such a movement.

I ask, then, ought things ever to have been allowed to come to such a pass? I am not going to blame the colonists or the Colonial Government. I think I appreciate to the full the local difficulties of the situation, and one must also not fail to remember that colonial statesmen cannot possibly have the same information, the same opportunities of judging Imperial necessities, as the statesmen who are responsible tor the control of affairs at the head of the Empire. I therefore blame His Majesty's Government for having allowed the situation to reach such an alarming pitch, and my object this afternoon is to ascertain from the noble Earl who presides over the Colonial Office whether he is able to adduce any proofs, by the publication of further Papers or otherwise, that I am not justified in holding His Majesty's Government responsible for having allowed things to go so far. Thus far the only explanation which we have received from members of His Majesty's Government is that it is impossible to interfere with a self-governing Colony. Now I protest, in the first instance, against the question-begging use of the word "interfere," which I think misleads the people in this country. If by interference is meant the assertion of authority which the Imperial Government does not possess or of claims which cannot be supported, then I agree that there can be no question of interference, and that interference is wrong. But if interference with a self-governing Colony means the proffering of advice and suggestions which can properly come from the head partner in the Imperial concern, if it means the explanation by the Mother Country of the rights of the other partners and the individual citizens of the Empire—if it means insistence on those rights, then, I say, we are as much justified in interfering with a self-governing Colony as we are in interfering with foreign nations as indeed we often do in similar cases.

I need not delay your Lordships by giving instances of the cases in which we have interfered with foreign countries—countries with whom we had no relations, and over whom we had no shadow of authority—on behalf of individual British citizens. But if the noble Earl still persists that it is impossible to interfere, then I will put to him this challenge. Supposing that the Transvaal were to decide to-morrow that the repatriation of Chinese coolies was to cease, will the noble Earl tell me that His Majesty's Government would not interfere? That is a question to which it would be very interesting to have a direct answer. Leaving that aspect of the question—it is, of course, highly debatable and possibly too academic, I would put this practical question: Why did you give self-government to the Transvaal Colony until this question was settled? That is really at the root of the whole question. The matter was ripe for decision. It had actually come to a head, and there was no possibility of ignoring it. The question, after all, was one of the main issues for which the South African war was fought, for which such stupendous sacrifices of blood and treasure were made by this country and the Colonies. Where, I ask, was the knowledge, the prescience, the statesmanship which we have a right to expect from those who control the destinies of the Empire and are at the head of the Imperial Government, that that question should have been ignored at the time?

The grant of self-government to the Transvaal Colony was somehow or other associated in the minds of the people of this country with the question which is known as that of Chinese slavery. There has been much dispute as to how it was actually associated, but the belief of most people in this country is that self-government was granted in order that Chinese labour should cease. Why, then, I ask, was Chinese slavery more important than Indian slavery? And I use the term Indian slavery advisedly and with full consideration. Let us compare the conditions. His Majesty's Government and their supporters taught the people what it was right to regard as slavery. They defined slavery, and their definition was accepted in all good faith by the great bulk of the people of this country. Now, the marks of slavery, according to Members of the Liberal Party, were identification by means of finger prints, inability to hold fixed property, and relegation to compounds. A member of His Majesty's Government—Dr. Macnamara—alluding to the fact that Chinese coolies had to give thumb prints only for registration, said in the House of Commons—

> "If this is not slavery, what is?"

I say, then, that there might have been—and this is one of the dangers that His Majesty's Government have escaped—a cry of Indian slavery in this country, a cry which would have gravely affected the prestige and influence of His Majesty's Government; and if there had been it would not have been a cry devised by mountebank politicians and spread by party wirepullers, but it would have emanated spontaneously from the hearts of the people—an irresistible manifestation of that Imperialist spirit which has always been innate in the people of this country, the spirit which protests at oppression and injustice wherever they may occur on the face of the globe.

The opportunity of making conditions at the time of the grant of self-government was lost; but the Government had more recent opportunities to which I shall presently refer. But, first of all, may I be permitted to clear the issue? There has been a great deal of misunderstanding about it, and as that misunderstanding continues I think it is well to use this opportunity of explaining the position of those in this country who have taken up the cause of our Indian fellow-subjects. No one who has spoken with any knowledge, or with any sense of responsibility, has denied the right of the Colonists to manage their own affairs. We admit that right. We admit to the full the right of the Colonies to restrict immigration. We admit the justice and the propriety of their contention that their territories should be regarded as white man's lands, and that they should be retained for the natural overflow of the population of this country. All that is elementary. It is a mere extension to communities of the ordinary rights of property. It is a right of property, but, like all rights of property, it is subject to well-known and well-understood limitations. No individual can exercise rights of property to the detriment of the community at large, no community can exercise rights of property to the detriment of neighbouring communities; still less can any individual or any community exercise rights of property to the injury and the detriment of those with whom they are associated or on whom they are in any way dependent.

Now, the Transvaal Colony is a partner in the great Imperial concern, and the Transvaal Colony, as her statesmen have most rightly and wisely recognised, cannot pursue her own interests in such a manner as to injure the other partners, any or either of them, or to injure the whole business. But it may be argued that this is a case of the private domestic concerns of the Colony. The analogy of individuals may be taken again. You may argue that in a business partnership the private life of one member does not concern the other. I say it does. The private life of a partner in any business concerns the other partners when the honour and credit of the firm, or the stability of the business, are affected; and I say that this is the case in regard to the Asiatic question in the Transvaal and elsewhere, even if you take the narrowest possible view of Colonial interests and duties. The honour of our nation, the reputation before the world of our Imperial hegemony, the stability of the Empire, are affected, and therefore we have a right to insist that our point of view—the Imperial point of view—should be considered; and the Imperial point of view requires this, that for the sake of the honour and the unity of the Empire, British citizens, whatever their colour, should be treated as such, that they should not be oppressed or degraded, that they should receive fair and even generous treatment wherever the British flag flies, and that pledges given by our Sovereign and by the British Government should not be disregarded on any account by British citizens in any part of the Empire. That point of view is not merely based on humanitarian and sentimental grounds. It is based on very practical considerations—those of the peace and contentment of all peoples united under the British Crown, and of the harmonious purpose without which the Empire cannot possibly be secure.

India as a part of the Empire, the largest part of the Empire, the great entity which has made the Empire possible, and, more than that, the strategic pivot without which the Empire could not possibly be secure—India, I say, is as much the concern of all the Colonies as she is our concern. If the Colonies were inadvertently to get us into trouble with India, they would do us as much, even more harm than if they got us into trouble with foreign nations. I say inadvertently, for it could not be otherwise. The Colonies value Imperial unity as much as, or even more than, we do. We have had ample proofs of that, not only in the South African War, but quite recently in the satisfactory circumstances which have arisen as regards Canada and Japan, and now this latest instance in the Transvaal. I say, then, that there is no question—we cannot doubt—that the Colonists value Imperial unity, and will make sacrifices, if sacrifices be necessary, for the sake of Imperial unity. But Colonial statesmen, and still more the people of the Colonies, cannot be so familiar with all the great problems which arise as the Ministers of the Imperial Government. They have not the information, and it is obvious that they are not brought into the same relations with other parts of the Empire and with foreign nations. I say, then, that it is the business of Imperial statesmanship to explain these considerations to the Colonies.

Some noble Lords opposite are and have been engaged in loud conversation during my remarks. There is a Standing Order of this House which requires that noble Lords who desire to indulge in private conversation should do so in the Princes Chamber. I am sure that I am voicing the wishes of every speaker in this House when I ask your Lordships to insist on the observance of that Standing Order, which is more honoured in the breach than in the observance. I myself have always carefully refrained from interrupting speakers by any loud or protracted conversation, and I think, therefore, I have some little right, the common right of every Member of this House, to ask that I should be treated in the same way.

I say that it is the business of Imperial statesmen to explain these things fully, and to explain them from the point of view of the superior knowledge which they naturally possess. Casual references are not enough. An eloquent passage in the speech of a Minister, or in a despatch is not what I mean by explanation. If we wish to bring home great national and Imperial necessities, requirements, and principles to the people of this country, we are only able to do so by constant reiteration, and by a system of political education which is familiar to you all. This it is that is required at the present stage of the development of the Empire from Imperial statesmen and from Colonial statesmen, but it is, of course, for Imperial statesmen to take the initiative.

Why was this not done at the Imperial Conference last year? It was not from want of suggestion. I ventured to make the suggestion to the noble Earl myself in this House, but he did not attach any great importance to it. After first explaining that it was not on the agenda of the Conference, the noble Earl, when he was pressed for a more satisfactory answer, said that this question of vital importance to the Empire would be considered at the Conference "should opportunity offer and time permit." I ventured to think at the time that that was not an answer which we could regard as satisfactory. If it was not an opportunity when Colonial statesmen came at great personal and public inconvenience thousands of miles over the seas to discuss questions of Imperial importance, what is an opportunity? And as for time permitting, who has ever heard that there is not time for the discussion of questions of vital importance in public affairs? Time must be made when these questions arise.

But let me descend from the general to the particular instance. Where, I ask your Lordships, in the Blue-book which has just been issued is there any proof that any attempt was made to explain to the Transvaal authorities the principle and the details of the question over which all the trouble has arisen? Take the question of the finger prints. It is not the whole question, and it has been given, perhaps, undue prominence, but it is important because it illustrates the general spirit of the legislation. The Blue-book shows what a very negative part was played by His Majesty's Government. His Majesty's Government allowed the Transvaal Government to tell them what was done in India. Why did His Majesty's Government not refer at once to the Government of India and ask them exactly how the matter stood there? If they had done so, they would have learnt that there are several methods of identification by means of finger prints, and that the ten-digit system, the system of simultaneous impressions, was only one of those methods, and was confined absolutely to criminals in India. They could have passed that information on to the Transvaal Government. The Transvaal Government relied on a Report by Sir Edward Henry, late of the Indian Service, and although that Report made it very fairly clear that there were different methods which were considered equally effective and less objectionable, yet it seems to have been misread in the Colony and here, and the impression seems to have been allowed to remain that there was only one method, and that, the method adopted by the Colonial Government.

The system in India is that in the case of the registration of documents only thumb impressions are given. Pensioners, whether they be civilian or military, are required to give the impression of the thumb and the four fingers of the left hand only. The impression of the fingers and thumbs of both hands is required only of criminals, but there is nothing in the Blue-book to show that these facts were considered or ascertained or communicated to the Transvaal Government. That question is, happily, settled for the present. But what I wish to impress on your Lordships is that it does not settle the whole question of Indian disabilities. The question of identification for the purposes of registration is only one detail of that larger question. It is a new question. It is a grievance which did not exist under the old South African Republic, and all the grievances which did exist under that *régime*, against which we protested "before the Empire and before the cvilised world," to quote the words of a former Colonial Secretary —all those disabilities remain. Let us hope that the better understanding that is bound to arise from the compromise which has been happily effected, a compromise which ought surely to result in mutual self-respect, will lead to a fair settlement of these other disabilities if the Colonies and the Indians are aided by wise counsel and prudent advice from the Government of this country.

But let me return to the opportunities of the Government, which in my opinion, were lost, for it is in relation to these that I hope the noble Earl will give us an explanation. Supposing that it was impossible to interfere, supposing that there was no opportunity of agreeing, no possibility of agreeing, on principle with the Colonial Government, I say that there were opportunities for bargaining; and you can bargain with any one, whether you have authority over him or not, whether he is a friend or a foe. There is no question of interference when it comes to bargaining, and more particularly can you bargain with any one to whom you lend money. That applies as much to the case of communities as it does to individuals. I ask, then, why, when you granted a Constitution to the Transvaal Colony, did you not make a bargain, if it was impossible to delay the grant of self-government? What, again, was the object of the reservation under Clause 39 to the Imperial Government of questions relating to Asiatics? One is inclined to ask whether His Majesty's Government only made this reservation in order that they might redeem electioneering pledges in regard to the Chinese.

Again, there was the opportunity of the Registration Law. Why was assent not made conditional on the drafting of fair regulations? The Blue-book does not show that any attempt at bargaining on this point was made. Still later you had the opportunity of the Immigrants Regulation Bill. Having failed before, surely you could have bargained then, but just because His Majesty's Government did not use their opportunity the Colony made the best of theirs, and the Blue-book shows us the extraordinary spectacle of this young child of freedom holding a pistol at the head of His Majesty's Government, and saying: "Now we are going to pass another law even more severe than the first, and we want you to assent to it by telegram before you have even seen the text." The noble Earl, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, very properly objected to this suggestion, but it is surely an illustration of the manner in which His Majesty's Government have pursued this matter that such a situation could ever have arisen.

Lastly, there was the opportunity of the Transvaal Loan. I hope the noble Earl will tell us why these opportunities were not used. I say once more that I do not blame the Colony. It is no part of my intention to blame the Colony. They were entitled to get all they could, and they naturally did their best to do so. But, the Blue-book shows that the attitude of His Majesty's Government throughout—was one, first, of timorous protest, and, secondly, of reluctant acquiescence in everything that was proposed. Such an attitude does not command the respect of communities any more than it does of individuals. We shall not quarrel with the Colonies, if we say straight out what we think and what we want, just as they say to us what they think and what they want; and what I desire to know is why His Majesty's Government have not adopted that frank and open attitude. In this matter the eyes of the world are upon us. By our action the world will judge of the sincerity of our professions in regard to the cause of justice and humanity, whether it be in our own affairs or in the affairs of others. Mr. Lyttelton, in a despatch to Lord Milner on 20th July, 1904, wrote as follows—

> "His Majesty's Government for many years repeatedly protested, before the empire and the civilised world, against the policy and

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laws of the late South African Republic in relation to this subject. His Majesty's Government hold that it is derogatory to national honour to impose on resident British subjects disabilities against which we have remonstrated."

Those disabilities, my Lords,—and this is the important point, and one which is very little recognised at this moment—those disabilities remain the same as ever. The registration question is a new one which has been superimposed.

Now, what are His Majesty's Government going to do? My Motion is one for Papers, and I hope the Papers which the noble Earl will be good enough to produce, if he accepts my Motion, will show, in the first place, whether there is any present intention of redeeming the lost opportunity, and referring this whole question as a matter of principle to the consideration of the Imperial Conference; and, secondly, whether any negotiations are proceeding at this time in regard to the removal of other disabilities. I will not detain your Lordships by reciting what those disabilities are, and still less will I venture to suggest how they might be modified and mitigated; but I venture to repeat that the civilised world will judge according to what is done, how far we value that national honour of which we have spoken, and how far we have the courage of our professed opinions. I am not exaggerating, my Lords. Those of you who look at the newspapers of the Continent will see how carefully foreign nations are watching our action in this matter. We have asked to be judged, and we shall be judged, in our claim to Imperial dominion and leadership in the world's counsels, by the action of His Majesty's Government in this matter.

Moved, for Papers relating to the treatment of British Indians in the Transvaal.—(*Lord Ampthill.*)

*EARL ROBERTS: My Lords, it is a great relief to me to learn that the trouble between our Indian subjects in the Transvaal and the Government in that colony has been settled, and in a manner which, it is to be hoped, will be successful. I agree it is a trouble which ought never to have arisen, if we may judge by the ease with which a compromise was arrived at as soon as public opinion was drawn to the question in dispute. In my opinion it is much to be regretted that some person, intimately acquainted with the habits and customs of the natives of India, was not deputed in the first instance to confer with the Transvaal Government when the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, 1907, was being drawn up. If this had been done, it is scarcely possible to believe that the Amendment would have been drawn up in a manner which gave such offence to our Indian subjects.

No one who knows the difficulties which the white men have to contend against in South Africa in earning a livelihood can for a moment doubt that the Transvaal Government is justified in making such laws as may be necessary to prohibit the future immigration of Asiatics into that Colony, and also to arrange for the deportation of those who have obtained admission by fraudulent means. But on perusal of the Blue-book which has recently been issued, I gather that it was not so much the Act itself that was resented by our Indian subjects as the measures which were adopted to give effect to that Act, chiefly the registration by finger prints and the insistence upon the names of female relatives being noted in certain cases. These were, in my opinion, grievous errors—errors which could not fail to cause the deepest offence to Indians, and to warrant their objecting to the law.

I rejoice that the question of registration has been settled, and that henceforth the finger-print system is not to be enforced in the case of Indians of whose respectability there can be no doubt; and I would earnestly express my hope that, in that class, may be included all natives who have had the honour of wearing the King's uniform, and have served loyally and faithfully in the Indian army. It is true, as stated by Sir Edward Henry, that finger prints are utilised in India in most branches of public business, but the origin of the finger-print system was the detection of criminals. Its use may since then have come into general practice; but the system has a smack of criminality; and I think we can all readily understand that its application, especially in a foreign land and to only one section of the community, must necessarily be felt as a degradation by any self-respecting Indian.

I hope, too, that in the form of registration for an adult Indian the mention of a female relative will not be insisted upon. It may seem a matter of small moment in this country, but I can assure your Lordships that it is a matter of the greatest importance to Indians. In their country, even amongst the most intimate friends, no allusion is ever made to a native's female relatives. So strong is this customary reticence that it is a sufficient reason for their objection to this law. When Indians elect to travel over the world they must, of course, abide by the laws of the country where they may be dwelling. At the same time, it is clearly our duty to watch as carefully over the interests of our Indian subjects as over the interests of our own subjects. And while the various Governments of South Africa are at liberty to make such laws as they may think necessary for the protection of those who are under their rule, we cannot expect that we shall escape obloquy, and perhaps something much more serious, if we do not do our best at all times to save our Indian subjects, wherever they may be, from being treated without due consideration.

*LORD CURZON OF KEDLESTON: My Lords, I should not like to remain altogether silent while this subject is being discussed. It is a subject which came very much to the front while I was in India. It is one in which I took the warmest personal interest, and in which the Government of which I was the head played a somewhat prominent part.

The question came before us in India in a twofold aspect in relation both to Natal and the Transvaal. The Government of Natal, where the same difficulties have long existed in a much greater and more acute degree than in the Transvaal, sent a deputation to India to ask us to agree to the repatriation, at the end of their term of engagement, of the labourers we had sent to them. We were willing to make this great concession to them—a concession somewhat unpopular with the coolies themselves—provided we could make terms to secure a sensible relaxation of the hardships and disabilities under which the free and unindentured Indian population of Natal then laboured. We found not much difficulty in coming to terms with the deputation, but the Natal Government declined to accept our proposals.

Then there came the question of the Transvaal. Your Lordships are all aware of the cruel and disabling restrictions that were placed upon the Indian population in that country. They were one of the contributory causes of the war. As soon as the war was over we felt it our duty, as the trustees of the Indian people in India, to address the then Secretary of the State upon the subject. We put, I think, a very strong plea before him. A little later, Lord Milner came to us with a request that we would provide him with a number of coolies—he first asked for 10,000 and afterwards for 20,000—to inaugurate railway labour in the new possessions of the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony. I have sometimes seen it stated that we declined this request. That was not the case. We agreed to find the men, and once again we used the position to endeavour to get better terms for the free Indians in the Transvaal. I am sorry to say that again we failed.

Since then matters have come to a head, and they have culminated in the crisis which has only just been dispelled during the past few days. I desire to join with my noble friend who has made such a powerful statement of the case and with Lord Roberts in their congratulations upon the compromise that has been reached. It is one that seems to me to be honourable to both parties. At the same time, the Blue-book which was circulated to us last week, and of which I have made such study as I could in the interval, strikes me as rather unpleasant reading. It leaves a rather disagreeable taste in the mouth. There seems to have been some lack of consideration exhibited by the Government of the Transvaal. In the first place, they rushed through their anti-Indian legislation with uncompromising and unnecessary and, as it seems to me, almost indecent speed. Secondly, there was a failure or apparent failure on the part of General Botha to act up to the terms of the undertaking which he gave to the noble Earl a year ago, to endeavour to find some method of identification superior to that of finger impressions and less liable to the objections that were raised against that system by Indians.

Further, as regards the finger-print system itself, as the noble Lord who has just spoken has pointed out, the analogy which was attempted to be drawn between it and the Indian practice was an unfair analogy, or at any rate it was unfairly used by the Boer Government, while the system and method of finger impressions that were proposed in the Transvaal were undoubtedly humiliating and wounding to the susceptibilities of our Indian fellow-subjects in that country. Then I think there was a failure on the part of the Transvaal Government to distinguish, at any rate up to the latest stage, between the Indians of good social *status* and refined education and the Indians of lower class and occupation—petty traders and artisans, whose competition really had to be feared. That is the charge—I do not state it in stronger terms —which we are justified in bringing against the authorities in the Transvaal.

Next, as regards the Government, I confess I think that the noble Lord (Lord Elgin) did listen a little too readily to the pleas which were advanced to him by the Boer Government. I think he showed an excessive deference to their presentation of the case, that his protest in favour of our own fellow-subjects might have been couched in a rather more heroic vein; and that, considering the great experience that the noble Lord had in India himself, where he left such an excellent reputation as an administrator and friend of the Indian peoples, he might have foreseen rather more clearly in the early stage the dimensions which this problem would assume in India and the intense feeling which would arise there. The fact is, if I may put it in a sentence, that there was a strange lack of imagination on both sides in this controversy, both in the Transvaal and here; and without imagination it is my experience that any Oriental policy is certain to break down.

Well, we have now arrived at a settlement of the question; but I imagine that his Majesty's Government will be the last to argue that this temporary settlement is a final solution of the entire problem. I am sure that your Lordships realise that this question is in reality about the most momentous and the most far-reaching which could possibly confront any body of British statesmen, since it raises the entire question of the moral and political basis of our Empire and of the rights which the members of that Empire in different parts of it may justly claim.

Let me from my residence and service in India state to your Lordships, if you will permit me, what I conceive to be the Indian point of view. It may be stated in a narrower and in a wider aspect. In the first place, as regards South Africa itself, the Indian coolie, or, at any rate, the educated man who is behind the Indian coolie and who has conducted this agitation, says that the coolie or the artisan is invited and even encouraged by our Government to emigrate from India. We send him to a colony which he enriches by his labour, and then society there appears to turn round upon him and treat him as if he were a pariah dog. He is penalised there, not for his vices, but for his virtues. It is because he is a sober, industrious, frugal, and saving man that he is such a formidable economic danger in the situation. Furthermore, the Indian remembers that, at any rate in a large number of cases, he has fought for the British Empire in South Africa, and that it was largely owing to his efforts that Natal was saved. I do not know if your Lordships have seen in this Blue-book a petition which emanates from a number of Indian soldiers who served the Empire, not only in India, but in South Africa, and who complain there in language of great pathos and almost of bitterness of the treatment which they were about to receive. That is an appeal which, I venture to say, no man in this House can read without compunction and even without a certain sense of remorse.

Now, let me, if I may, follow the Indian on to the wider field of argument. He claims the full rights of citizenship of the British Empire. I do not think it is for us to blame him for that. We have taught it him. We have inspired him with these ideas. They are the result of our speeches, our writings, our text-books, which he studies in India, our principles of administration and of education. A feeling has been growing up in India in recent years, and it arises from the value which is attached by the educated Indian to the principles of freedom and equality which he has been taught to regard as the birthright of the British citizen. That is a very valuable, and, in my judgment, a very sacred, feeling. I do not think we ought to say anything or do anything to depreciate or to deride it in the smallest degree; because it is, after all, the only basis upon which you can expect the loyalty of an Asiatic population to an alien rule to be permanently developed or maintained. So much for the Indian point of view, in so far as I know it.

But no one can possibly give an opinion upon this question who looks at it merely from one side or the other. The Indian point of view is so opposite and, if one may say so, so irreconcilable to the Colonial point of view, that I should be the last to contend that this question should be regarded exclusively through Indian spectacles or decided in Indian interests. The Colonial point of view is entirely different. I, perhaps, have more sympathy with the Indian aspect myself, but, still, I endeavour to understand the Colonial point of view. I realise that it is a natural one, and that, in a way, it is quite unanswerable. You cannot expect the colonist to be an altruist in these matters. He is, if you like so to describe him, selfish; but if he is selfish it is only in the pursuit of a principle which is the guiding law of all life, and even of all civilisation, and that is the instinct of self-preservation. He desires to keep for the white man the Colonies which the white man has won and in which the white man can live.

I do not believe, from a careful study of the evidence, that the English colonist in South Africa or elsewhere is in the least degree inspired by a feeling of racial superiority or class antagonism. He says to himself: "That which has been won by British money and British blood let the British keep." He declines to acquiesce in any system which would mean a sensible and permanent lowering of the standard of life, and he feels, perhaps more than anything else, the danger, being already confronted with an enormous black problem, which hangs like a cloud on the horizon of his existence, of having superadded to that problem the danger and menace of a great brown problem as well. If this be a fair diagnosis of the case, it appears then that you have two forces, both of great potency and of great vitality, pulling in opposite directions within the framework of the same Empire. If that be so, we may well realise that it is one of the most difficult problems with which any Government can be confronted.

In these circumstances what is the duty of the Government? I do not mean of this Government in particular, but of any Government. No rough and ready solution of this problem is possible. No laws can be laid down, no principles devised by His Majesty's Ministers or anyone else, which will finally solve this question. But what they can do is this. They can endeavour to reconcile these opposing factors and principles, and so to work that there shall be, as far as possible, no clash or collision between them. And the methods by which they can proceed in that direction are, I think, these. In the first place they can see, or their representatives in India, as far as India is concerned, can see, that fair terms are invariably secured for the labourer or the emigrant when he goes out, both for his labour and for his residence in the country to which he goes, and, should his return be desired, for his return when it is to come about. It is for the Government to see that a good bargain is made for its own subjects in all our Colonies, and perhaps still more, the bargain once made, to see that the terms are not hastily or rashly altered at a later date to the detriment of the man who has staked his all in his acceptance of the terms which he understood his Government to offer him.

Then I think that the Government ought to see that the restrictions imposed upon Asiatics are made as little vexatious as possible, as little injurious as may be to religious and social susceptibilities which we may, perhaps, not fully understand, but which, as the noble and gallant Field Marshal who spoke just now pointed out, are embedded almost as if they were sacred principles in the groundwork of the Indian nature. Further, they ought to see that nowhere shall occur the painful situation of Indian gentlemen or native gentlemen, from wherever they may come, of character, respectability, and education, being treated as if they were common coolies and labourers, and herded together, so to speak, in a pen with men of very much lower *status* and occupation than themselves. In fact, it ought to be the object of the Government to show to Colonial Governments that just treatment of our Colonial fellow-subjects is quite compatible with the best interests of the colony itself.

There is another suggestion which has been made, namely, that the Government should try to discover and to open, perhaps in some other part of Africa or of the world, some other field of emigration to which our Indian fellow-subjects may proceed, free from the disabilities and restrictions to which I have alluded. I will not pursue that suggestion this evening, although, for my own part, it is one which I do not look upon with quite so much favour as some of the authorities who have taken it up. In any case I hope that the recent proceedings which have culminated in a victory on the whole for our Indian fellow-subjects, which I think they have deserved by their dignity and their patience, may read a lesson, not, perhaps, altogether unneeded, both to the Government of the colony and to the Government which sits upon that bench—a lesson to the Government of the colony that it cannot afford to treat without the utmost consideration the rights of these immigrants, its British fellow-subjects, in any part of the Empire; a lesson to His Majesty's Government that they owe a duty just as great to the dusky millions of India as they owe to the white people of their own race in any colony of the British Crown.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Earl of ELGIN): My Lords, I do not think that the noble Lord who has just sat down will doubt that I am as sensible as he is of our responsibilities to the dusky millions of India. Although I welcome and am grateful for the congratulations tendered by the noble Lords, I think the debate at this particular moment is not well timed or so considerate as the action taken in another place where an Amendment to the Address which would have raised this subject was withdrawn. But as this debate has taken place, may I say that I concur with what was said by the noble Lord who last spoke, and also by the noble Lord who initiated the discussion, that on the whole this settlement may be accepted as one which is satisfactory to both sides; and I rejoice exceedingly that in a matter where feeling has become so acute as in this case a settlement has been arrived at which can be so described.

It is my duty to the Transvaal Government, which, if I may venture to say so to the noble Lord opposite (Lord Curzon), is not "the Boer Government," to acknowledge the readiness which they have shown to listen to any suggestions which we have sent from here to them, and to consider any proposals which have been laid before them. The noble Lord spoke of a conversation—for it was a conversation only—which I had with General Botha, and the undertaking General Botha then gave to consider how far it was possible to abandon proposals to take digit impressions. I believe, in fact I am sure, that that was a promise most carefully carried out—that full consideration was given to that question. If the noble Lord will turn to the second of the telegrams which have been published to complete the series, he will find that the Transvaal Ministers said that they never expected any objection to finger-prints seeing that 100,000 Indians had given ten finger-prints in Natal without raising any objection. I quote that, not to show that they were right in that deduction, but only to show that, as I am sure is the case, the Transvaal

Ministers did have every wish to deal with this matter in a reasonable and sympathetic spirit.

The noble Lord who opened the discussion seems, however, to think that there had been too much delay in coming to a settlement. I do not know how anyone took any action to delay that settlement; but, if anybody did wilfully interfere to prevent a settlement, I should entirely agree with him in condemning that action. All that I can say for myself—and this goes back to the objections I have taken to the initiation of this debate to-night—is that we really cannot discuss this matter until we receive further information. It is a very difficult thing to say when persistence in an opinion firmly entertained becomes obstructive and unjustifiable; and in this case, where all we have at present of the concluding stages of the story is by telegraph, I do not think it is a profitable occupation for this House to weigh the different sides of this question; and I venture to hope that, when we are able to speak with full acquaintance with the evidence, we may find it to be quite unnecessary to discuss the respective responsibility of the various parties to the controversy. As I understand it, the noble Lord opposite admits the right of a colony to exclude even British subjects.

*LORD AMPTHILL: To restrict immigration.

THE EARL OF ELGIN: Very well, if he puts it in that way. I was not quite certain whether the noble Lord who spoke last did go so far as that.

LORD CURZON: Oh, yes.

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: I say at once that that is a very large question which, if it were to be discussed in detail, would require a great deal more consideration than we are able to give it this evening. But we have given self-government to these Colonies in various parts of the world, and self-government means a devolution of responsibility and especially the responsibility for law and order.

I think the noble Lord who spoke last said that one influence with the Colonies was the view that what was won by the whites should be kept for the whites. But if I may put it in this way, I should like to ask how small white communities can undertake to perform the duties that fall upon them in virtue of undertaking self-government if they are not allowed to have within their bounds an adequate number of white inhabitants. If that is conceded to me, I proceed to say that in the competition between the East and West the economic forces would inevitably turn the scale in favour of the East and thereby prevent free competition; and therefore it is that we find the British Indians excluded from our Colonies, not, as the noble Lord said, because of any bad qualities, but because of the possession by them of good qualities. It is their patient industry, their frugal and temperate habits, that make them such formidable competitors to the white man. The noble Lord said, in arguing as to the allowance one ought to make for our Indian fellow-subjects (and I only mention this in order to rectify what I am sure was a slip), that we ought to remember that Indians had fought in the South African war.

LORD CURZON OF KEDLESTON: I am well aware that the expedition I myself sent out to South Africa was not an Indian expedition, but attached to it were a number of Indians who, in smaller capacities, comported themselves with infinite gallantry in the field.

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: But not in the fighting line?

LORD CURZON: Oh, no.

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: I thought it better to make it quite clear what the noble Lord really meant. Surely it will be evident that if there was an influx of Asiatics, that would, on account of the economic forces to which I have alluded, tend to destroy the political equilibrium which is necessary for the development of the Colonies themselves.

But to return to the dispute happily now closed, I would point out that it was not in any way connected with the restriction of immigration. This policy of the restriction of immigration has been in unbroken existence for something like twenty years. It was approved originally by Lord Derby in 1885. It was strongly professed by Lord Milner; and Lord Selborne introduced into the Crown Colony Government the same Bill, or practically the same Bill, which was introduced afterwards by the new Government, and which has passed into law. If noble Lords ask for reasonings on this subject they may look up the despatch of 21st May, 1906, where they will find that Lord Selborne gave very full reasons for his advocacy of this policy; and if they wish to see the position I took up they may look up my reply of 25th November, in the same year. They will see the reasons why at that time I thought it desirable to postpone assent to that Bill. Shortly speaking, it was that there were certain alterations which I thought desirable in the measure, and they could not have been introduced before the initiation of the new form of government. In these circumstances I thought it better simply not to sanction the Bill and to let it then be introduced again, if it were so advised, in the new Parliament. It was introduced in the new Parliament and passed immediately, as the first measure in its existence, by an absolutely unanimous vote in both Houses.

I really do not quite see how the noble Lord can blame me for non-interference in a matter of that kind. The noble Lord seemed to think I did not consult the India Office in this matter. I gave it the most careful consideration, and, after consultation with my colleagues, I came to the conclusion that it was my duty to advise His Majesty not to disallow the Bill. There are two points on which the noble Lord spoke with some feeling and on which I should like to say a word or two. In the first place, I wish to say that I do not think it has ever been the intention of the present Government of the Transvaal to attempt or to wish to degrade or to humilate, or impose fresh restrictions upon the British Indians within their boundaries. In the second place, I have to say that I believe it to be a fact that every one of the disqualifications which were the subject of specific exception by the British Government before the war have ceased to operate. I may tell the noble Lord, as he shakes his head, that I make that statement on the authority of a letter which, curiously enough, I received only yesterday from the Governor and High Commissioner, who, writing of course while this dispute was in progress, was good enough to go through the whole matter and inform me upon these and other points. Perhaps I ought to add, in order that there may be no misunderstanding, that there are other disqualifications still in existence, disqualifications in regard to the tenure of land, the franchise, and mining. But these disqualifications, I am informed, were never taken exception to in the same manner as the others.

It comes really to this, that what raised this contest was the method of registration, because in the first place it was compulsory and because in the second place it was by digit impressions. For myself, I do not think it is necessary or desirable to enter into these differences, which now, fortunately, have come to an end. I would only say, with reference to the remarks made by the noble and gallant Earl, the Field Marshal, that I shall be only too glad to take note of, and to do anything I can to forward, the suggestions he made with regard to special classes of British Indians, especially with regard to ex-soldiers and the mention of the female relatives. Perhaps I may say one word about digit impressions. It so happens that Sir Edward Henry, who is now Chief of the Police in this Metropolis, was chief of the Bengal Police when I was in India, and was working this system, of which I saw something then, and I feel inclined to deprecate the association of criminality in any form or kind with this valuable manner of identification. My own feeling is that the impression of the thumb by itself would in this case have been sufficient, because all that was required was ordinary identification, and ordinary identification would have been secured, in my opinion, by thumb impression. But impressions of the fingers have really nothing criminal about them. They were introducted into the system simply for the purpose of classification; and though, of course, they apply more readily and more usefully to criminals, still I do not think they should be altogether set aside for that reason. On the other hand, it has to be borne in mind that it is not the case that the thumb alone is used in India except in the case of criminals. I think the noble Lord mentioned that the left thumb and four fingers were used in the Indian Army. At any rate, we had information from the India Office to that effect, and if the noble Lord will do me the justice of looking at this Paper he will find that we did send that information to the Transvaal Government as soon as we obtained it.

*LORD AMPTHILL: When?

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: I admit it was late, but we sent it as soon as it reached us.

*LORD AMPTHILL: That is the point.

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: But I cannot send on a thing until I get it. Really I do not know that I can usefully say more than this. This settlement has been accepted, I believe, as an honourable settlement by both sides, and therefore I think it gives hope for renewed and continued good feeling between them. If so, good indeed will have come out of evil; and I rejoice if, in place of being subjected to disabilities which, no doubt, were irksome, the Indian colony in the Transvaal—though, of course, it must be limited in numbers—will in future be maintained in a definite and honourable position.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My Lords, my two noble friends who have already spoken have dealt so completely with this subject that I have very little to add to what has been said by them. May I, in passing, express the satisfaction, which, I feel sure, is not confined to this side of the House, with which we have listened to the noble Lord now sitting behind me (Lord Curzon), who addressed us for the first time? The noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies suggested in his speech that there was something inopportune in the action of my noble friend behind me in bringing forward this subject to-night. What is the position? Let me say that if His Majesty's Government had told my noble friend that it was detrimental to public interests that there should be a discussion on this question, my noble friend, I have little doubt, would have yielded to pressure. But is there really any reason for which attention should not be called to this matter? We learn from the Secretary of State that this satisfactory settlement has not only been arrived at, but has been accepted by all concerned, and the Papers are laid upon the Table for our consideration. It seems to me that, in those circumstances, it would be a little hard that we should be denied the right of commenting upon them if we desire to do so. And may I further ask whether, in the comments of either of my two noble friends, there was anything at all unreasonable, or of what might be described as an incendiary character? I must say I thought not. I thought both my noble friends were careful to show that they were fully alive to the fact that there are two sides to this question—an Indian side and a Colonial side. I am quite sure that the noble Earl the Colonial Secretary and the noble Marquess who sits by him, Lord Ripon, both of whom have had experience of Colonial and Indian administration, must realise as fully as we do that both sides of the case deserve to be taken into careful consideration.

There are several admissions which, I think, we are all ready to make in the consideration of this question of the treatment of British Indians in the Transvaal. In the first place, I admit unreservedly the right of a self-governing Colony to decide whether its territory shall in future be the home of a British or of an Asiatic race. There is no difference of opinion as to that. If you concede that, you must also concede to the colony effectual means of excluding the entrance of persons belonging to Asiatic races; and, if there is to be effectual exclusion, there must be some effective means of registering those Asiatics who are already in the country. These three propositions seem to me quite incontrovertible.

I go further. I think that in the case of the Transvaal particular weight is due to these considerations for this reason, that the colonists of the Transvaal have a native question of their own, and a very serious one, already on their hands, and it is entirely reasonable of them to ask that they should not have a second native question further complicating the situation. And not only that, but, considering the geographical position of the Transvaal, we must all of us realise that owing to its proximity to Natal, where a large Asiatic population is already established, it is very necessary that there should be effectual means of preventing a gradual influx of Asiatics across the frontier. Yet while yielding these propositions, we may feel, as I certainly do feel, that we have a right to demand that these Asiatic British subjects who have already acquired a *status* in the colony should be treated with the utmost fairness and consideration. The question we really have to ask is whether they have been treated with that fairness and consideration. I am bound to say that my study of the Blue-book leads me to a different conclusion. I was very much interested in the statement of the Secretary of State to the effect that the whole of the disabilities of which the British Indians complained had ceased to operate.

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: I said, "of which the British Government had complained before the war."

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I am much obliged for the correction. What are the grievances? We have heard of the finger-prints. I am not going to lose myself in the details of that intricate question. But it is evident from the papers that the system of finger-print identification resorted to by the Transvaal Government was one which was repugnant to those concerned. If it were not so, why was it that they were ready to go to prison rather than to submit to it? The Secretary of State admitted that in his opinion the thumb mark alone would have been a sufficient means of identification. If so, it is a pity that that view was not pressed very strongly on the Transvaal Government. But there is also the question of requiring those persons who had already been registered, and who had received assurances—I think from Lord Milner himself—that their registration was sufficient, to undergo a second registration. Then there is another grievance which seems to me to be a very genuine one indeed. I understand that these British Indians are not allowed to own property, even within the limits of what are known as the Indian locations.

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: I believe they cannot own land.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: That, to my mind, is a tremendous disability to put upon British subjects.

THE EARL OF ELGIN: I mentioned that, but made the reservation that that requirement was one which was not taken exception to by the British Government.

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I do not know how that was, but I do remember that one of the main grounds of complaint against President Kruger's Government was that these British Indians were herded together and compelled to live in a very insanitary and out-of-the-way part of the towns where they resided, and that they were denied proper opportunities of doing their business. It seems to me that closely connected with that is the question whether they should be absolutely denied the right of owning a single acre of ground in a British colony of which they are citizens.

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: There was a disability to trade outside the locations which was a great grievance; that is removed. But the disability in regard to the holding of land was not mentioned by the British Government at the time and has not been removed.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I do not know whether it has been raised, but it seems to me a genuine grievance, and as long as it is not removed, these people have a natural cause for complaint. Then there is the question of passes. Is it not the case that these Indians, no matter what their position is, are compelled even at the bidding of a native policeman to show their passes? That seems to me to be a slight upon an Indian of good position. There still remains the power of arbitrary expulsion under which an Indian even of good position may receive short shrift if the local authorities desire to drive him out of the country. I do not in the least complain of the Colonial Government for taking stringent measures to relieve themselves of the presence of undesirable Asiatics, but what I do venture to suggest to the House is that in dealing with these people it is necessary above all to discriminate between one class and another. There is no country in the world where class distinctions count for so much as they do in India; and, when you render a respectable merchant, domiciled in the country as a man of business, liable to treatment in no way differing from that which can be accorded to a common coolie, you do create a grievance which is felt not only amongst the British Indians in South Africa, but amongst his Majesty's Indian subjects in all parts of the Empire. All these things have really been admitted by His Majesty's Government themselves. We find in the Blue-book a very vigorous protest from the Secretary of State for India against the proposed treatment of the British Indians; we find similar protests from the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the noble Earl himself. What we desire to draw attention to, and what we regret, is that this illustrious triumvirate should not have had a little more courage, and, having raised their objection, should not have stood to it a little more manfully. What exactly happened was that they raised their objection, and then allowed themselves to be put off by assurances, not of very great importance, in regard to the treatment of distinguished Asiatic visitors when they arrived in South Africa, and by a rather vague promise of future legislation.

I cannot help thinking that His Majesty's Government might have taken advantage of the series of opportunities which were offered to them for bargaining and making better terms for these people. It seems to me that they knew what it was desirable to do, but that they missed the opportunity of doing it. Now we have a satisfactory compromise, and let us hope that it will afford a solution of the difficulty. But what has happened in the meantime has been of the gravest importance. There has been great excitement in India at a time when it was not at all desirable that there should be public excitement. There have been meetings attended by native gentlemen and chiefs of the highest position, and the whole country has been stirred by these events. In our view these are events which need never have occurred if earlier in the day His Majesty's Government had had the courage of their opinions, and pressed rather more strongly the very sound views which we know they all held.

One word more. The noble Earl took exception to Lord Curzon's observation that there were British Indians in the Transvaal who had been under fire with our troops. I think his statement was absolutely correct. I find in the document numbered 53 in the Blue-book the petition of more than 100 Indian ex-soldiers, who recite that they are British subjects and were most of them brought to the colony in connection with the Transvaal Corps raised at the time of the late war—

> "When your petitioners came to South Africa they were told by their officers that it would be possible for them at the end of the war to settle in any part of South Africa and to receive honourable employment."

Those men would naturally feel a sense of very rankling injustice when they were treated in the manner I have described. I do not think this discussion can have done any harm, and I earnestly hope it may be of some use in calling attention to what is, after all, a very momentous question, the necessity of doing what we can to secure for the King's subjects, no matter of what race or colour, just and considerate treatment in whatever part of the British Empire they may happen to find themselves.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: My Lords, this is a subject on which I feel very strongly, for, having been connected for four years with the administration of India, I acquired a deep interest in all that concerns the people of that country and the most earnest desire to advance whatever would be to their good; and certainly I do not think it would be easy to find a question more painful in certain respects than this question is to me at this time. But I cannot forget that I am not only an ex-Viceroy. Being a member of the Government I am bound to consider the question in all its aspects, not only as it relates to the natives of India, but also in relation to the general principles of colonial government. And when I look at the question from that point of view I am encountered by this difficulty. Not only do I believe that, as a general principle, our self-governing Colonies ought to be left to manage their own internal affairs, but I think also that it is impossible to take any other course. I do not, I am sorry to say, think that it is in the power of any Secretary of State or any British Government effectually to control the management of the internal affairs of Colonies of this description.

A discussion arose, I believe, in 1899 which afforded me a peg on which to hang some remarks on that question; and I then ventured to point out that the Government at home could not and ought not to be held responsible for the management of native questions within the borders of self-governing Colonies, because they had no means of enforcing their views, and that to attempt to do so beyond the expression of opinion and the proffering of advice was both a useless and an unwise proceeding. When you enter into negotiations with a person over whom you have no means of ultimate control, it is impossible to enforce your views beyond a certain point. My noble friend has made it perfectly clear that an arrangement has now been accepted by both sides. My only fear is, knowing how little our proceedings in Parliament are really understood in India, or very often in the self-governing Colonies, that this discussion may tend, though I hope it will not, to shake the arrangement which has been arrived at, and possibly to make those who have accepted it on both sides discontented with the conclusion to which they had agreed.

I listened with the deepest interest to the remarks of my noble friend Lord Curzon, and I heartily join with the noble Marquess, if Lord Curzon will allow me to do so, in expressing my great satisfaction that he should have had this opportunity of giving us his views. I do not differ much if at all, from the points on which, towards the end of his speech, he said he would like to insist. I do not think they were unreasonable, but I do say that you must remember the conditions under which you are acting, and that when you desire to approach, not the Transvaal Government only, but any self-governing colony, you must do so with the feeling that you cannot force your opinions upon them, and that you only weaken your authority if you attempt to go beyond a certain point. My noble friend who has just sat down referred to the meetings which have taken place, and to the discussions in the public Press, and said there had been much dissatisfaction caused in India. It is earnestly to be hoped that nothing will now tend to weaken the arrangement which has been arrived at, or to render its ultimate success less probable. It is very natural that there should be an objection on the part of the white population of any colony when there has been a great influx of persons of a totally different race and habits into their colony. I can remember when I was Secretary of State for the Colonies that Natal raised a difficulty in consequence of the great influx of Asiatics into that colony, and there was then actually a probability of their getting a majority for electoral purposes. That was a thing you could not expect that any British colony would be willing to agree to. I do not think the noble Marquess quite succeeded in defending the exact words that were used by Lord Curzon about the natives who had taken part in the war in South Africa. My noble friend will remember that from beginning to the end of the Transvaal war it was a principle that natives and persons of another race should not be allowed to take part, and Asiatics and natives were not allowed to take any part in the active operations of the war.

LORD CURZON: I was responsible for sending from India from 10,000 to 20,000 men. They acted as transport corps, ambulance carriers, and in other capacities, and they were under fire on most battlefields of the campaign.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: They were not active soldiers.

LORD CURZON: Many of them were killed.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: I trust very earnestly, now that this discussion is over and a settlement reached at which we can rejoice, that no misunderstanding will arise. I do not blame Lord Ampthill nor Lord Curzon for the part they have taken in the matter, nor for defending the natives of India against the unfair treatment to which at one time it was intended to subject them; but I hope nothing will now be said to weaken the settlement, and that the question may be considered as closed.

*LORD AMPTHILL: I have no intention of detaining your Lordships by making anything in the nature of a reply, but there is one thing I must say. My Motion was for Papers, and the noble Earl has not given me an Answer on that point. Possibly he has no further Papers to lay, but if that is so there is, at any rate, one document which I presume he will give—namely, the letter from the Governor of the Transvaal to which he referred in his speech. That letter makes an interesting distinction between disabilities and disqualifications—a distinction which I did not understand myself, but which is of vital importance to the comprehension of the present situation. There were other Questions which I put to the noble Earl and which I will not presume to repeat, but I wish to say that he has not answered any of them. I therefore consider it open to me to raise them again on some future occasion. It is possible that they were rendered inaudible by the conversation which was going on on the Government Benches, a circumstance which was in strange contrast to that of last night, when we on this side listened to a personal explanation by a noble Lord on that side of the House in absolute silence. Yet when I was endeavouring to-night to explain to the best of my poor ability a question of Imperial importance there was a noise on the Government side of the House which made it difficult for me to make myself audible. I trust that the noble Earl can tell us whether there are any Papers which he can lay on the Table, and, in any case, whether we shall see the important letter to which he referred in his speech.

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: I did not quote any letter. I said I had received a letter, and I gave a fact in my own language out of the letter. I certainly am not going to publish the letter. It is a private one from the Governor. As to Papers, so far as I know I have published all the Papers up to date; but if there are any more I will have them published.

Motion, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 4th February, 1908.

The House met at quarter before Three of the Clock.

NEW WRIT.

New Writ for the Borough of Leeds (South Division), in the room of Sir John Lawson Walton, K.C., deceased.—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

STANDING ORDERS (PRIVATE BUSINESS).

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS (Mr. EMMOTT, Oldham), in moving an Amendment to Standing Order 98, explained that its object was to provide that the Chairman of the Standing Orders Committee should no longer be an *ex officio* member of the Committee of Selection. The work of the latter body had increased so enormously of late that the Chairman of the Standing Orders Committee had found it impossible to attend the meetings. The proposal had the approval of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Rushcliffe Division of Nottinghamshire (Chairman of the Standing Orders Committee) and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Norfolk, who was Chairman of the Committee of Selection last year, and in these circumstances he asked the House to adopt it.

Standing Order 98 was read and amended, in line 2, by leaving out from the first word " of," to the word " Members," in line 3, and by inserting the word " Eleven," instead thereof.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

Police and Sanitary Committee. Ordered, That the Committee of Selection do nominate a Committee, not exceeding Twelve Members, to be called the Police and Sanitary Committee, to whom shall be committed all Private Bills promoted by municipal and other local authorities by which it is proposed to create powers relating to Police or Sanitary Regulations in conflict with, deviation from, or excess of the provisions of the general Law.

Ordered, That Standing Orders 150 and 173a apply to all such Bills.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, Papers, and records.

Ordered, That Four be the quorum of the Committee.

Ordered, That if the Committee shall report to the Committee of Selection that any Clauses of any Bill referred to them (other than Clauses containing police and sanitary regulations) are such as having regard to the terms of reference it is not in their opinion necessary or advisable for them to deal with, the Committee of Selection shall thereupon refer the Bill to a Select Committee, who shall consider those Clauses and so much of the Preamble of the Bill as relates thereto, and shall determine the expenditure (if any) to be authorised in respect of the parts of the Bill referred to them. That the Committee shall deal with the remaining Clauses of such Bill, and so much of the Preamble as relates thereto, and shall determine the period and mode of repayment of any money authorised by the Select Committee to be borrowed and shall report the whole Bill to the House, stating in their Report what parts of the Bill have been considered by each Committee.

Ordered, That the Committee have power, if they so determine, to sit as two Committees, and in that event to apportion the Bills referred to the Committee between the two Committees, each of which shall have the full powers of, and be subject to the instructions which apply to, the undivided Committee, and that Four be the quorum of each of the two Committees.—(*Mr. Herbert Samuel.*)

PETITIONS.

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING).

Petition from Dumbarton, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSED PREMISES (EXCLUSION OF CHILDREN).

Petitions for legislation: From Ashton-under-Lyne; Audley; Birmingham (two); Bishop Auckland; Boxford; Chaldron; Chatteris; Chesham; Chester; Ealing; Hailsham; Holmes Chapel; Hornchurch; Hoxton; Irthlingborough; Islington; Kirkby Stephen; Langdale; Launceston; Leeds; Leicester (two); Letchworth; Liverpool; Loughborough; Maidstone; Manchester (three); March (two); Marple; Moss Side; Newhaven; Olton; Penrith; Prittlewell; Putney; Richmond; Rushden; Rye; Seaford; Shipley; Soham; Southend-on-Sea; Southfields; Stockton Heath; Stourbridge; Streatham; Sutton Coldfield; Tottenham (three); Wadebridge; Whittlesea; Wisbech; and Woodstock; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING ACTS.

Petition from Colyton, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY.

Petitions for legislation: From Birmingham; Cambridge (three); Chatteris; Chesham; Gloucester; Huntingdon; Leicester; London (three); Northampton; Royal Leamington Spa; Tipton; Wednesbury (two); and Yelling (two); to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1907–8).

Estimate presented, of the Further Sums required to be voted for the Service of the year ending 31st March, 1908 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 27.]

ARMY (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATE, 1907–8.

Copy presented, of Estimate of the Further Amount that will be required during the year ending 31st March, 1908, to meet Expenditure not provided for in the original Army Estimates of the year under Vote 5; Grants, Allowances, and Miscellaneous Charges of Volunteer Corps, including the Permanent Staff, also Expenses of County Associations [by Command]; to lie upon theTable, and to be printed. [No. 28.]

LIGHTHOUSE ADMINISTRATION (ROYAL COMMISSION.

Copy presented, of Report of the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into and report on Lighthouse Administration. Volume I. Report [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Minute of the Committee of Council on Education in Scotland, dated 4th February, 1908, providing for special grants-in-aid of certain School Boards in Scotland [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Church Temporalities (Ireland).—Copy of Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General upon the Account of the Irish Land Commission in respect of Church Temporalities in Ireland for the year ended 31st March, 1907 [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 29.]

BREWERS' LICENCES.

Return ordered, "of Accounts of the number of persons in each of the several Collections of the United Kingdom licensed as Brewers for sale, *i.e.*, Common Brewers, Victuallers, Retailers of beer to be drunk on the premises, Retailers of beer not to be drunk on the premises, and Brewers of beer not for sale, particularising each class in each Collection; and of the number of Licences issued to Victuallers and Retailers of beer to be drunk on the premises; and stating also the quantities of malt, unmalted corn, rice, etc., sugar, including its equivalent of syrups, etc., hops and hop substitutes, used by Brewers of beer for sale, and of malt and sugar used by Brewers not for sale, from the 1st day of October, 1906, to the 30th day of September, 1907."

"Of the amount of Licence Duty paid and Beer Duty charged from the 1st day of October, 1906, to the 30th day of

September, 1907, distinguishing Brewers for sale from other Brewers."

"Of the number of Brewers for sale: (i.) Who use malt and hops, or hop substitutes only; and (ii.) Who use malt with substitutes for same and hops or hop substitutes paying for Licences, from the 1st day of October, 1906, to the 30th day of September, 1907, separating them into classes, according to the number of barrels of beer charged with duty calculated at 1·055 degrees gravity, viz.: under 1,000 barrels; 1,000 and under 10,000; 10,000 and under 20,000; 20,000 and under 30,000; 30,000 and under 50,000; 50,000 and under 100,000; 100,000 and under 150,000; 150,000 and under 200,000; 200,000 and under 250,000; 250,000 and under 300,000; 300,000 and under 350,000; 350,000 and under 400,000; 400,000 and under 450,000; 450,000 and under 500,000; 500,000 and under 600,000; 600,000 and under 700,000; 700,000 and under 800,000; 800,000 and under 900,000; 900,000 and under 1,000,000; 1,000,000 and under 1,500,000; 1,500,000 and under 2,000,000; 2,000,000 barrels and over; showing separately, in each class, the quantities of malt, unmalted corn, rice, etc., sugar, including its equivalent of syrups, etc., hops and hop substitutes used; and stating also the number of bulk barrels of beer produced, and the amount of Licence Duty paid and Beer Duty charged in each class."

"And, of the number of barrels of beer exported from the United Kingdom, and the declared value thereof, and where exported to, from the first day of October 1906, to the 30th day of September, 1907, distinguishing England, Scotland, and Ireland (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 14, of Session 1907)."—(*Mr. Runciman*).

TELEGRAPH (CONSTRUCTION) BILL.

Copy ordered, "of Memorandum in reference to the Telegraph (Construction Bill."—(*Mr. Sydney Buxton.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Income Tax Returns—Employers Forms.

LORD R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been called to the form of Return of Employment under the provisions of the Finance Act, 1907; and what is the statutory authority for the last two columns of that form.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) Yes. The form is issued under the authority of Section 21 (1) of the Finance Act, 1907, which requires an employer to make a return of the payments made to any persons employed by him in respect of that employment. Considerable misapprehension being known to exist as to the necessity for including fees, bonuses, and other similar emoluments, a special column for such payments was inserted in the return. The last column was inserted to save trouble to employees claiming exemption or abatement. It has not, however, been found to be of much use, and will be omitted in future editions of the form.

Punishment for Outrage at Monastir.

MR. G. GREENWOOD (Peterborough): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he has any official information showing that on 8th January last a Greek band committed a murderous outrage at the village of Dragosh, near Monastir, by burning to death all the inmates of four houses, including women and children; and, if so, whether any steps have been or are being taken by the Turkish Government to punish the offenders.

(*Answered by Secretary Sir Edward Grey.*) A Report has been received from His Majesty's Consul at Monastir from which it appears that a large band surrounded and set fire to four houses in the village of Dragosh. All the persons living in these four houses perished, the number of vitcims being twenty-six; five men, ten women, and eleven children. The nationality of the band which perpetrated this outrage has not yet been definitely ascertained, but the matter is being investigated by a Commission which has been sent from Monastir.

Applications under the Irish Labourers Act.

MR. J. DEVLIN (Belfast, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he could state the number of applications received under the Labourers Act, and the number sanctioned by the Local Government Board, in the various counties in Ulster up to the end of December last; and the number of applications received, and the numbers approved of, for the provinces of Munster, Leinster, and Connaught, for the same term.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) It is presumed that the Question relates only to applications received under the Act of 1906. The first scheme under that Act was received in May last, and from then to the 31st December there were received 136 schemes, affecting 134 out of the 213 rural districts in Ireland. The first of the following tables shows how these schemes have so far been dealt with. The particulars for each of the counties in Ulster are given in the second table. If the hon. Member desires information as to the work done under former Acts, I would refer him to the Annual Report of the Local Government Board, which gives the necessary information up to the 31st March, 1907.

Particulars showing how Schemes under The Labourers (Ireland) Act, 1906, received by the Local Government Board up to the 31st December, 1907, have so far been dealt with.

	Proposed by Schemes.		Authorised by Inspectors. 64 Orders made.		About to be authorised by Inspectors. 25 Orders being made.		Being dealt with.*	
	Cottages.	Allotments.	Cottages.	Allotments.	Cottages.	Allotments.	Cottages.	Allotments.
Ulster - -	3,644	279	1,288	47	313	37	1,636	86
Munster -	6,617	1,464	1,405	313	1,018	177	2,771	589
Leinster -	7,565	1,344	2,626	579	417	45	3,027	385
Connaught -	4,377	285	583	20	305	3	1,906	120
Totals -	22,203	3,372	5,902	959	2,053	262	9,340	1,180

* Inquiries ordered into all these except two.

Particulars in respect of Counties of Ulster.

County.	Number of Rural Districts in County.	Number of Schemes received.	Particulars of Schemes received.		Particulars of Provisional Orders made by Inspectors.		Particulars of Orders about to be made by Inspectors.		Particulars of Schemes being dealt with.	
			Cottages.	Plots.	Cottages.	Plots.	Cottages.	Plots.	Cottages	Plots.
Antrim - - - - - - -	8	4	346	3	22	—	—	—	319	3
Armagh - - - - - - -	5	4	162	18	19	—	35	—	101	18
Cavan - - - - - - -	7	4	339	127	126	39	75	23	49	7
Donegal - - - - - - -	10	8	1,080	43	594	7	173	2	129	1
Down - - - - - - -	8	4	631	4	288	—	—	—	289	1
Fermanagh - - - - - -	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Londonderry - - - - - -	4	1	99	—	91	—	—	—	—	—
Monaghan - - - - - -	5	3	262	81	37	1	30	12	148	56
Tyrone - - - - - - -	7	4	725	3	111	—	—	—	601	—
Totals - - -	59	32	3,644	279	1,288	47	313	37	1,636	86

The Strength of the Militia.

MR. PIKE PEASE (Darlington): To ask the Secretary of State for War what was the number of officers, non-commissioned officers and men of the Militia, by arms, serving with the Colours and with the Militia Reserve on the 1st October, 1905, and 1st February, 1908 respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Figures can be given for 1st October, 1905, and 1st January, 1908, (the figures for 1st February, 1908 are not yet available). The permanent staff is excluded in both cases.

	Officers.		N.C.O.s and Men.		Total.		Reserve Division.	
	1st Oct., 1905.	1st Jan., 1908.	1st Oct., 1905.	1st Jan., 1908.	1st Oct., 1905.	1st Jan., 1908.	1st Oct., 1905.	1st Jan., 1908.
R.F.A. - -	11	12	251	206	262	218	45	10
R.G.A. - -	381	334	13,003	11,727	13,384	12,061	525	58
R.E. - -	95	49	2,154	1,706	2,249	1,755	51	4
Inf. - -	1,889	1,725	69,629	68,978	71,518	70,703	7,019	2,248
R.A.M.C. -	19	23	777	1,055	796	1,078	17	1
Totals -	2,395	2,143	85,814	83,672	88,209	85,815	7,657	2,321

The Denshawai Affair—Release of Prisoners.

MR. MACKARNESS (Berkshire, Newbury): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the prisoners who were committed to prison in June, 1906, for assaulting British officers at Denshawai have been released, and, if so, by whose authority; and whether the village of Denshawai is still subject to any civil disability or other penalty by reason of the occurrence which took place there in June, 1906.

(*Answered by Secretary Sir Edward Grey.*) The prisoners in question were released on January 7th, by order of the Khedive, who was acting with the assent of His Majesty's Government. Denshawai is not now subject to civil disability or any other penalty. The Omda was restored in June last, and the Ghafirs are the same in number as before the occurrences referred to.

Postage Rates to Constantinople.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that letters for Constantinople from Great Britain are despatched at a cost of one penny for postage; whether he will make this fact public; or are letters sent there at the profitable and popular rate only to certain individuals in Turkey on public and private affairs.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The postage on letters for Constantinople from this country is 2½d. for the first ounce, and 1½d. for each succeeding ounce. Letters posted in this country prepaid 1d. only are liable to surcharge.

Postage Rates to Morocco.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON: To ask the Postmaster-General, whether he is aware that the postage of a letter from France to Morocco is 10 centimes, or 1d.; whether he is aware that the postage of a letter from the United Kingdom to Morocco is 2½d.; and whether he will take the necessary steps, in the interests of British commerce and trade, to reduce the postage to Morocco to 1d. per letter.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I am aware that the postage of a letter from France for Morocco was recently reduced and is now 10 centimes up to 20 grammes. The question of reducing the postage rate from this country is engaging my attention.

"Dutch Cheshire" Cheese.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture whether his attention has been called to a case in which Dutch cheese has been invoiced as Dutch Cheshire, has been so retailed, and on analysis was found to contain 8 per cent. only of fat, such fat having been added, and not being butter fat; whether, in view of the provisions of the Merchandise Marks Act, he will institute proceedings; and whether the proper description of such an article should not be margarine cheese.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) The Board are unable to identify the case to which reference is made, but if the right hon. and gallant Member will be good enough to supply them with further particulars they will have inquiry made with a view of the institution of proceedings. Cheese of the nature described must be sold as margarine cheese.

Land for Small Holdings at Abingdon.

MR. GEORGE D. FABER (York): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury why the Duchy of Cornwall, as owners of a farm at Shippon, near Abingdon, containing about 430 acres, recently gave the lessee of the farm, whose family had been tenants from year to year under the Duchy since 1891, and who had no desire to leave it, notice to quit the whole of the farm, for the purpose of establishing thereon a society called the North Berks Small Holdings and Allotments Society, instead of allowing the procedure to be followed in relation to the matter which is prescribed by the Small Holdings and Allotments Act, 1907, under which the tenant might have been heard.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) I learn that the Duchy of Cornwall had not given, and never had any intention of giving, notice to quit to the tenants of a farm at Shippon, near Abingdon. When last year the Duchy was approached to let some land at Shippon for allotments, it was arranged with the tenants, who occupy two farms of together about 1,000 acres, that they would give up not less than 16 acres, and up to 50 acres, for the purpose, but no applications were received, presumably because there was more land for allotments at disposal than could be let. At least this was the statement of the local authority at Abingdon when the land was offered to it by the Duchy. On receipt last month of an application for one of the two farms, the Duchy land steward, assuming that there was now a real demand for some land, wrote to inform the manager of the farm of the application, but not to the tenants, on whom alone a valid notice to quit could be served, so as to prevent his purchasing more seeds, etc., than might be required. He stated, however, that he would personally arrange as regards the lands to be given up for small holdings. No communication with the North Berks Small Holdings and Allotments Society has taken place, as the Duchy land steward has instructions to arrange with the local authorities for the letting of Duchy land for small holdings. The whole matter is in a preliminary stage, as the land steward has no authority to enter into any binding contract, but has to submit for the sanction of the council any arrangement which he may recommend.

Stamp Duty on Marine Insurance Policies.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether it is proposed to continue the *ad valorem* stamp duties on marine insurance.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) I cannot add anything to the statements which I made on this subject during the debates on the Finance Bill of last session, until the time comes for introducing the Budget.

Evicted Tenants on the Bloomfield Estate, county Fermanagh.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH (Fermanagh, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether the Estates Commissioners have yet purchased the Bloomfield Estate, county Fermanagh, or are about doing so; and will the demesne lands or part of them be used to provide new holdings for Messrs. Graham, M'Farland, and other local evicted tenants listed by the Estates Commissioners as persons who may properly be provided with new holdings or be restored to their old holdings.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners have not purchased the estate referred to in the Question, but have been informed that the owners are about to institute proceedings for the sale of the estate to them under Section 6 of the Irish Land Act, 1903. Until such proceedings have been instituted it is not possible to say what lands may be comprised in the estate for sale. The claims of all local evicted tenants will be carefully considered in connection with the distribution of any untenanted land which may be acquired in the neighbourhood.

Wages Reductions at Waltham Abbey Gunpowder Factory.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): To ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office, what number of men have had their wages reduced at the Royal Gunpowder Factory at Waltham Abbey during the last two years, and of this number how many were married men; and whether he will grant a Return showing the amount of such reduction, the number of men affected by it, and the length of their service.

(*Answered by Mr. Buchanan.*) Of the 708 employees (men, women, and boys) employed at the Royal Gunpowder Factory, Waltham Abbey, at the end of January, 1908, 114 have had their wages reduced during the last two years. This number includes forty-four men whose total earnings have been reduced, but whose hourly rating has been increased and whose hours of work have been reduced from about sixty-six hours to forty-eight hours a week. The reduction in other cases is chiefly owing to the men being employed on less highly paid work to avoid the necessity of discharging them. The total average weekly reduction in wages has been £24 17s. 5d., of which £13 19s. 5d. is in respect of the forty-four men above-mentioned. As against these reductions, 155 employees have had their wages increased during the same period, the total weekly increase amounting to £19 2s. 2d., of which only £1 13s. 8d. is for automatic increases, the remainder, £17 8s. 6d., being pure increase of wages. No statistics as regards marriage are available; and a statement as to the length of service of each individual concerned would take a little time to prepare, but could be furnished if the hon. and gallant Member presses for it.

Strength of the Volunteer Force.

CAPTAIN MORRISON-BELL (Devonshire, Ashburton): To ask the Secretary of State for War what was the number of the officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of the Volunteers on 1st October, 1905, and 1st February, 1908, respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) As the Return is rendered quarterly, no figures for 1st February, 1908, are available. The following are the figures for 1st October, 1905, 1st January, 1906, 1st October, 1907, and 1st January, 1908 (exclusive in all cases of the Honourable Artillery Company and the Permanent Staff).

Strength on.	Volunteer Officers.	Volunteers (Non-Commissioned Officers and Men.)	Total.
1st October, 1905 - - -	8,772	241,347	250,119
1st January, 1906 - - -	8,722	230,434	239,156
1st October, 1907 - - -	8,735	244,589	253,324
1st January, 1908 - - -	8,701	228,613	237,314

Strength of the Special Reserve.

CAPTAIN MORRISON-BELL: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state (by arms) the age and service of the non-commissioned officers and men of the special reserve (formerly the Militia) on 1st February, 1908.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Presumably figures for the Militia are required, as recruiting for the Special Reserve only commenced on 16th January, and the voluntary transfer of the present members of the Militia to the Special Reserve will not take place until after the conclusion of the next annual training of their units. There are no Militia figures available for 1st February. The Returns are only sent in annually, for 1st October, and if the hon. and gallant Member will be kind enough to wait for the publication of the General Annual Return, which will shortly take place, he will find in it the required figures for 1st October, 1907.

Strength of the Regular Army.

MR. PIKE PEASE: To ask the Secretary of State for War what was the total number of the officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of the Regular Army serving with the colours on 1st October, 1905, and 1st February, 1908, respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The figures for 1st October, 1905, and 1st January, 1908, are as follow, the figures for 1st February, 1908, not yet being available—

—	Officers.	Non-Commissioned Officers and Men.	Total.
1st October, 1905:—			
Home - - - - - -	5,383	124,547	129,930
Colonies and Egypt - - -	2,512	61,630	64,142
India - - - - - -	2,893	75,168	78,061
Total - - - -	10,788	261,345	272,133
1st January, 1908:—			
Home - - - -	5,401	114,317	119,718
Colonies and Egypt - - -	2,148	48,687	50,835
India - - - - - -	3,028	73,063	76,091
Total - - - -	10,577	236,067	246,644

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Army Statistics.

MR. PIKE PEASE (Darlington): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what was the number of the officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of the infantry of the line serving with the colours at Home, in the Colonies and Egypt, and in India, respectively, on the 1st October, 1905, and the 1st February, 1908, respectively.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddingtonshire):

The figures for the 1st October, 1905, and 1st January, 1908, are as follows, the figures for 1st February, 1908, not yet being available :—

	Officers.	Non-commissioned Officers and Men.	Total.
1st October, 1905.			
Home - - - -	2,038	61,533	63,571
Colonies and Egypt - -	943	31,322	32,265
India - - - -	1,442	53,677	55,119
Total - - -	4,423	146,532	150,955
1st January, 1908.			
Home - - - -	2,125	57,288	59,413
Colonies and Egypt - -	733	22,403	23,136
India - - - -	1,463	51,821	53,284
Total - - -	4,321	131,512	135,833

The Militia.

MR. PIKE PEASE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what was the number of officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of the Militia, by arms, serving with the Colours and with the Militia Reserve on the 1st October, 1905, and 1st February, 1908, respectively.

MR. HALDANE: Figures can be given for 1st October, 1905, and 1st January, 1908 (the figures for 1st February, 1908, are not yet available). The permanent staff is excluded in both cases :—

	Officers.		N.C.O.'s and Men.		Total.		Reserve Division.	
	1st Oct., 1905.	1st Jan., 1908.	1st Oct., 1905.	1st Jan., 1908.	1st Oct., 1905.	1st Jan., 1908.	1st Oct., 1905.	1st Jan., 1908.
R.F.A.	11	12	251	206	262	218	45	10
R.G.A.	381	334	13,003	11,727	13,384	12,061	525	58
R.E.	95	49	2,154	1,706	2,249	1,755	51	4
Infantry	1,889	1,725	69,629	68,978	71,518	70,703	7,019	2,248
R.A.M.C.	19	23	777	1,055	796	1,078	17	1
	2,395	2,143	85,814	83,672	88,209	85,815	7,657	2,321

Case of Private Smith, Middlesex Imperial Yeomanry.

MR. JOHN WARD (Stoke-on-Trent): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, whether his attention has been called to the dismissal by the magistrate of the charge of being an absentee, brought against Arnold Hardy Smith, a member of the Middlesex Imperial Yeomanry, on 14th August last; whether any claim has been made by or on behalf of Arnold Hardy Smith for the costs incurred in rebutting the unfounded accusation of the commanding officer; and if so, what action has been taken in the matter.

MR. HALDANE: My attention has been called to this case. A claim for repayment of legal expenses incurred by Arnold Hardy Smith was made by a firm of solicitors. As the magistrate with all the facts before him, advisedly refrained from awarding costs, the Army Council were unable to make any grant in the case.

MR. WARD: In view of the Answer given to-day as to the payment of the expenses of the accused officers in the Woods Court of Inquiry, are we to take it that officers and privates in this matter are to be treated on an entirely different footing?

MR. HALDANE: No, Sir, the two cases are not analogous. In the case of the officers the charges were dismissed after full inquiry, but in the case of Private Smith the magistrate seemed to think the medical evidence was somewhat dubious, and although he was not prepared to set aside the medical certificate, he marked his sense of the case by refusing costs.

Irish Trade Statistics.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether he is aware that the Governments of France and Belgium have agreed to publish statistics of their direct trade with Ireland; and can he say whether any, and, if so, what other Foreign States with whom Ireland has trade relations have agreed to the representations made to them on this subject.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): The Answer to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative. As regards the second part of the Question, the Governments of the following countries have consented to classify Irish goods separately from those of Great Britain—

Argentina.
Belgium.
Boliva.
Bulgaria.
Chile.
Colombia.
Ecuador.
Egypt.
France.
Guatemala.
Mexico.
Netherlands.
Norway.
Persia.
Peru.
Russia.
Spain.
Sweden.
Siam.
Venezuela.

MR. DUNCAN (Lanarkshire, Govan) asked if the request that this differentiation should be made emanated from the Government of the United Kingdom.

SIR EDWARD GREY: Yes, we asked for it to be done.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in view of the fact that France and Belgium now publish in their official reports statistics of their direct trade with Ireland, he will now make representations to Canada and Australia on this subject with a view to enable Ireland to learn the exact amount of her trade with these Colonies.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): This suggestion was made to the Canadian Government last year but that Government reported that it was not practicable to separate the exports of Irish produce from those of Great Britain in their trade returns. The Australian Government will now be asked whether they can adopt the suggestion.

Congo State—Consular Reports.

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether further Consular Reports as to the present condition of the Congo

State will be laid before Parliament; and, if so, when.

SIR EDWARD GREY: Further Reports from His Majesty's Consular Officers in the Congo will be laid shortly.

Denshawi Trials.

SIR W. J. COLLINS (St. Pancras, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether the special tribunal under the decree of 1895, by which the Denshawi prisoners were sentenced, is still in operation; and if so, whether any change in procedure has been effected, whereby sentences passed by such tribunal shall in future be subject to appeal.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I beg to refer the hon. Member to my reply to the hon. Member for South Donegal of 31st July last. There has been no change in the situation since that date, which is to the effect that the tribunal will not be brought into operation under the old conditions.

Macedonian Reform.

MR. GOOCH (Bath): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he can describe the nature of the proposals to the Sultan and the Great Powers which His Majesty's Government have made for dealing effectually with the principal causes of disturbance in the Macedonian vilayets.

SIR EDWARD GREY: His Majesty's Government have proposed to the Great Powers that the task of restoring public security in Macedonia should be undertaken by mobile columns of a largely increased Gendarmerie force under the command of foreign officers with definite executive powers, and that in order to provide funds for the maintenance and adequate equipment of this force the numbers of the Turkish troops in Macedonia should be reduced. Proposals for an increase and extended use of the Gendarmerie were also made to the Sultan.

Sleeping Sickness.

*MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what measures have been taken to prevent the spread of sleeping sickness from Uganda towards Nyassaland.

MR. CHURCHILL: The question of the spread of sleeping sickness towards Nyassaland is being investigated by a party of scientific experts sent out by the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine with the assistance of a grant from Government funds. When their Report has been received the Secretary of State will consider, in consultation with the Governor of the Protectorate, what measures, if any, are required. The whole matter is being closely watched.

*MR. REES: May I ask whether the disease is abating in Uganda itself?

MR. CHURCHILL: The disease is being controlled by administrative measures in Uganda. Although it is undoubtedly virulent, its spread can be prevented.

Land Surveys in the Malay States.

MR. WEDGWOOD (Newcastle-under-Lyme): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the re-surveying of alienated lands in Negri Sembilan, in the Federated Malay States, is being done at public expense.

MR. CHURCHILL: I understand that former surveys have been found to be defective, and that in consequence what is contemplated is practically a complete re-survey of the State, the cost of which will be undertaken by the Government.

MR. WEDGWOOD was understood to ask if the re-survey would not add to the value of the lands and whether the charge might not be legitimately charged on the land.

MR. CHURCHILL promised to bear the point in mind.

Repatriation of Chinese from the Transvaal.

MR. W. T. WILSON (Lancashire, Westhoughton): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can state the number of Chinese who were repatriated from South Africa during the year 1907.

MR. CHURCHILL: The numbers repatriated were:—

During the first quarter - -	1,188
During the second quarter -	1,947
During the third quarter - -	5,051
During the fourth quarter - -	10,876
Total for the twelve months -	19,062

MR. MYER (Lambeth, N.): May I ask whether these Chinese have been replaced by native labour?

MR. CHURCHILL: Yes, Sir. Up to the present their places have been much more than filled by native labour.

Colonial Crown Agents.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Secretary of State is satisfied with the existing constitution and administration of the Office of the Crown Agents for the Colonies; what are the arrangements and conditions under which clerks enter this office; whether they undergo a competitive examination conducted by the Civil Service Commissioners, as in the case of other Government departments; and, if not, will he say why this is not done.

MR. CHURCHILL: The hon. Member is no doubt aware of the exhaustive inquiry instituted in 1901 by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham and of the views expressed in a published despatch of 26th February, 1904, which emanated from the late Colonial Secretary. The Secretary of State informs me that he accepts generally the position assumed by his predecessors with regard to the office of the Crown Agents. The clerks in the office are not Civil Servants and are therefore not subject to the conditions under which Civil Servants enter the Service. They are nominated by the Crown Agents who are responsible for their selection and for the adequate performance of their duties.

MR. CLAUDE HAY was understood to ask if the right hon. Gentleman would consider the propriety of making a change in this matter.

MR. CHURCHILL said the question had received a great deal of consideration, and it was one on which great differences of opinion existed. He could not say at the present moment whether any change would be made. He did not think any new matters would be brought to notice other than those set out in the despatches of the late Colonial Secretary.

Crown Agents' Reserve Funds.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether a sum of a quarter of a million sterling or thereabouts is now held by the Crown Agents; and, if so, how that money is invested, by whom administered, and under what check.

MR. CHURCHILL: The Office Reserve Fund of the Crown Agents, to which I presume the hon. Member refers, amounted on 31st December last to £431,310. It is intended to provide for the pensions of the Crown Agents and their staff, and to cover deficiencies in the income of the office which may be caused by fluctuations of business. It is invested in securities approved by the Secretary of State, in the names of the Permanent Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Crown Agents. The Crown Agents are charged with its management and application under the direction of the Secretary of State. It forms a part of the accounts of the Crown Agents, which are audited by the Comptroller and Auditor-General.

Australian Wages Board.

MR. GOOCH: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when Mr. Aves' Report on Wages Boards in Australia will be printed.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): Mr. Aves informs me that he hopes to complete his Report early next month.

Prosecution for Blasphemy.

MR. BOTTOMLEY (Hackney, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the pending prosecution of Mr. Harry Boulter upon a charge of blasphemy is being conducted at the expense of the Treasury;

and, if so, upon whose authority the proceedings were initiated.

MR. GLADSTONE: The proceedings were initiated by the Commissioner of Police with my approval, and the cost will be borne by the Police Fund. The case is *sub judice*, but I may, I think, go so far as to say that the prosecution is not undertaken in respect to matters of religious belief and opinion, but solely in respect to the decencies of public speech in a public place, and the preservation of the public peace.

MR. BOTTOMLEY: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will also direct his attention to certain writings of the right hon. Gentleman, the Secretary of State for India and other fashionable agnostics——[Cries of "Order."]

MR. GLADSTONE: I am not aware that those writings are likely to lead to any breach of the peace.

Imported Meat.

MR. BOWLES (Lambeth, Norwood): On behalf of the hon. Member for the Rye Division of Sussex, I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board what steps, if any, are being taken to remove the danger to the public health arising from imported meat, and to carry out the recommendations contained in Dr. Buchanan's recent Report on the subject.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): I have caused regulations to be prepared under the Public Health (Regulations as to Food) Act of last session dealing with the subjects referred to in Dr. Buchanan's Report, and I am now in communication with the other Departments concerned with regard to them.

Milk Supply.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH (Derbyshire, W.): I beg to ask the Prime Minister if, in view of the widespread anxiety existing in many parts of the country, he will cause a full inquiry to be made into the question of the supply of milk in relation to public health before any legislation is introduced.

MR. JOHN BURNS: Perhaps I may be allowed to answer this Question. The Government are desirous that there should be legislation with regard to milk supply during the present session, and I could not promise further inquiry before introducing a Bill on the subject.

MR. LUPTON (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): Is it a fact that the chief defect in the milk supply of this country is a want of supply at all?

[No Answer was returned.]

Parcel Postmen's Pay.

MR. WEDGWOOD: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General at what rate the work of men specially employed to carry parcels at times of great pressure, such as Christmas, is paid for in town and country.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): In the case of London the rate of pay to casual assistants acting as postmen and porters in connection with letter and parcel mails was raised by me last Christmas from 20s. to 24s. a week, or to 6d. an hour. Sixpence may be now taken likewise as a fairly general rate for the provinces, but the payments vary according to local conditions.

Postmen's Compassionate Allowances.

MR. BOTTOMLEY: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to the case of a Hackney postman who, after thirty years service, died whilst stamping letters; whether, under the Superannuation Acts, there is no power to grant a compassionate allowance to the man's widow, who is in distressful circumstances; and whether he will consider the desirableness of so amending the Acts as to cover such a case in future.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: The Superannuation Acts make no provision for the widows of deceased civil servants, and I have not any public funds at my disposal enabling me to make any grant to the widow of the postman to whom the hon.

Member refers. The Rowland Hill Fund, to whom the case was represented, have, I am glad to learn, made a grant to the widow. The question of amending the Acts is not one which falls within the province of my Department.

MR. J. WARD: Arising out of that Answer may I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the Committee on Postal Servants did not make some recommendation dealing with cases of this kind.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: This comes within what is known as the Courtney scheme, and, if it is accepted, the widows in cases like this would be provided for.

MR. J. WARD asked if all the Hobhouse Committee's recommendations had been adopted except this particular one.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: As I did not know this question was going to be raised I have not refreshed my memory by looking up the Report, but I rather think the Committee pointed out that this was a matter which did not concern the Post Office alone but all the Civil Service, and that they were not in a position to deal with it. I believe the views of the Civil Service have been taken as to the desirability of adopting the Courtney scheme; that a majority decided in favour of it and that the matter is now under consideration by the Treasury.

MR. CHIOZZA MONEY (Paddington, N.): Is it not the case that in Germany the widows of civil servants are provided for?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: Yes.

MR. J. WARD: Can the right hon. Gentleman say what was the result of the vote taken on this question?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I understand that so far as the Post Office is concerned there was a very large majority in favour of the proposal to adopt the Courtney scheme, but I do not remember the result so far as other branches of the Civil Service were concerned; I believe, however, that the Treasury has under consideration the steps necessary to give effect to the scheme.

Assistant Masters in Secondary Schools.

SIR FRANCIS CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he has now considered the position of assistant masters in secondary schools, as declared in the judgment on the Richmond school case; and whether he will secure by legislation that such teachers should have reasonable notice in case of dismissal and an appeal to some public authority, before whom the dismissed teacher should have the right of urging his case in person, or by his representative.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. McKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): This matter is engaging the earnest consideration of the Board, and the question of legislation is before them, but I am not in a position at present to make any statement on the subject.

The Queen Victoria Memorial.

SIR W. J. COLLINS: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he can now state the date by which it is expected that the Queen Victoria Memorial will be completed.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. HARCOURT, Lancashire, Rossendale): The lower part of the Memorial, including fountain basins and bas-reliefs will, I hope, be finished and open before Whitsuntide. I cannot yet say when the whole Memorial will be completed as this depends partly on the supply and delivery of the marble.

Agricultural Holdings.

MR. BOWLES: On behalf of the hon. Member for the Rye Division of Sussex. I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture whether Bills to consolidate the Agriculture Holdings Act and the Small Holdings Act will be introduced this session.

THE TREASURER OF THE HOUSEHOLD (Sir EDWARD STRACHEY, Somersetshire, S.): Bills for the purpose are in a forward state of preparation and we hope that they may be introduced and passed into law, with the general consent of the House, at a very early date.

Potato Disease.

MR. ROGERS (Wiltshire, Devizes): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether the Board is aware that a new and destructive disease of potatoes, known as black scab (*chrysophalyctis endobiotica*), has lately been introduced into Great Britain, and that outbreaks have now occurred in nine counties; whether the Board is aware that the disease is now being disseminated by seed potatoes from the affected area; and whether the Board, in order to prevent the disease spreading throughout the country and being introduced into Ireland, will deal at once with the matter under the powers conferred on them by the Destructive Insects and Pests Act, 1907.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: The disease to which my hon. friend refers was first observed in England in 1901, and it has since spread to many districts, chiefly in the North-west of England and in North Wales. A leaflet on the subject both in English and Welsh has been widely distributed. I shall be glad to send some copies to my hon. friend. The possibility of taking action against the disease under the Destructive Insects and Pests Act, 1907, is under consideration.

Inspectors of Scottish Schools.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland how many of the twenty-five senior and ten junior inspectors of schools hold diplomas in the Theory and Practice of Education from any British university; and whether it is the intention of the Department to ask those not so qualified to undergo a period of training.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): So far as is known no inspector in the service of the Department holds a diploma of the kind mentioned. Such diplomas, so far as the Scottish universities are concerned, are of recent institution, and the universities granting them have now discontinued their issue, following upon the institution of the provincial committees for the training of teachers. It is not the intention of the Department to ask any inspector in actual service—all of whom have had experience in teaching before appointment—to undergo a period of training. Adequate training as well as sufficient experience in teaching will be a condition of future appointments.

Case of James Larkin.

MR. GEORGE CLARK (Belfast, N.): I beg to ask the Attorney-General for Ireland if it is intended to proceed further with the trial of the indictment against James Larkin, in which a Dublin jury recently disagreed.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. CHERRY, Liverpool, Exchange): The reply is in the negative.

Irish Government Appointments—Case of Mr. Ennis.

CAPTAIN CRAIG (Down, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state what were the several employments and occupations of Mr. Ennis prior to and at the time of his recent appointment as Registrar of the Court of Appeal, the qualifications required in cases of such appointments, and the salary attached to the office.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.) Mr. Ennis has not been appointed recently to any office, and is not the Registrar of the Court of Appeal. Thirteen years ago he was appointed to be one of the Registrars of the Chancery Division and he still fills that office. The Judge under whom he acts writes that it would be impossible to have a more capable, loyal, or zealous officer. No qualifications for the appointment of registrar are prescribed by statute. Mr. Ennis was a practising barrister at the date of his appointment and had for the preceding two and a half years held the post of private secretary to the Lord Chancellor. The salary attached to the office of Registrar in Chancery is £1,000 per annum.

Irish Local Government Inspectors.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state what were the several employments and occupations of Mr. MacSweeney prior to and at the time of his recent appointment as Local Government Board Inspector, the qualifications required in cases of such appointments, and the salary attached to the office.

I beg also to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state what were the several employments and occupations of Mr. Cosgrove prior to and at the time of his recent appointment as temporary Local Government Board Inspector, the qualifications required in cases of such appointments, and the salary attached to the office.

MR. BIRRELL: Prior to and at the time of his appointment as temporary inspector under the Local Government Board, Mr. MacSweeney was a journalist. Mr. Cosgrove, who is a member of the Irish Bar, was also a journalist. As regards the qualifications for the post of temporary inspector I would refer to my Answer to the hon. Member for North Leitrim on 17th April last. The maximum salary of the office is £500 a year.

MR. W. MOORE (Armagh, N.): In regard to the qualification of these gentlemen I should like to ask if the right hon. Gentleman has seen the complaint of the *Freeman's Journal*, which suggests that he has used the power of the Government to bribe for their service these excellent officials?

MR. BIRRELL: No, sir.

Kilmore Outrage.

MR. STAVELEY-HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on 26th November three men were fired at from behind a hedge in the townland of Kilmore, County Clare, as they were driving along a road; and whether any arrests have been made.

MR. BIRRELL: On 24th November last two shots were fired in a field at Kilmore at a time when three men were passing along the road. A man was arrested and taken before the resident magistrate, who refused informations. There was no evidence to show that the shots were fired at the men.

Mount Butler Outrage.

MR. STAVELEY-HILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received the police report that four head of cattle grazing on the Mount Butler lands, and belonging to Mr. D. Keesham, were mutilated by having their tails cut off; and whether any arrests have been made.

MR. BIRRELL: A police report as to the offence referred to in the Question was received in the month of October last, when the matter occurred. The offence was committed at night. No arrests were made.

*MR. BYLES (Salford, N.): Is it not a common practice for ladies and gentlemen in this country to cut off the tails of their dogs and horses?

[No Answer was returned.]

Missing Crown Jewels.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Crown jewels and other property lost from Dublin Castle have been recovered; and can he state in whose keeping they were during the time they were mislaid.

MR. BIRRELL: The stolen jewels have not been recovered.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Having regard to the stupendous crime, will the Chief Secretary proclaim Dublin Castle? It is the only disturbed area in Ireland.

Clare County Court Judge.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state what were the several employments and occupations of Mr. Bodkin prior to and at the time of his recent appointment as County Court Judge of Clare, the qualifications required in cases of such appointments, and the salary attached to the office.

MR. BIRRELL: The qualification prescribed by Statute for the position of County Court Judge and Chairman of Quarter Sessions in Ireland is that the person to be appointed shall be a practising barrister-at-law of ten years standing at the least, who shall have actually practised ten years in His Majesty's Superior Courts in Dublin, and shall not at the time of his appointment to such office have retired from such practice. Mr. Bodkin possessed this qualification, and I do not propose to make enquiry as to any employment in which he may have engaged outside his professional practice. The salary attached to the office is £1,400 a year.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): Is it a fact that Mr. Bodkin has also been employed by the *Freeman's Journal* as leader writer during the last three or four years?

MR. BIRRELL: I have no information as to who writes articles in Irish newspapers. It is a subject to which I am totally indifferent, but I see no reason why a Member of the Bar should not be employed to write leading articles in any respectable newspaper.

MR CHARLES CRAIG: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he has ascertained if it is a fact that Mr. Bodkin has been chief leader writer —nothing else—for a number of years, and has not held a brief during that period?

MR. BIRRELL: I believe that is not so, and must refer the hon. and gallant Member to the illiterate gentleman of the county of Clare, who seems to know more about it than I do.

MR. MOORE: What made the illiterate gentleman make an affidavit for the Government at the end of the case?

MR. BIRRELL: A pint of porter.

Leitrim Extra Police Charges.

MR. MOORE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that the Leitrim County Council refused to pay the demand of the receiver of the Royal Irish Constabulary for £322 for extra police in that county up to 30th September, 1907; and if the Government intend to enforce payment of this claim by deduction from grants or otherwise.

MR. BIRRELL: On 18th December last the Leitrim County Council passed a resolution protesting against the levy of the amount referred to in the Question. Since that date the statutory certificate which is a condition precedent to the recovery of the amount, has been issued, and this will come before the council at their next meeting. If the council should refuse to pay, the necessary steps for the recovery of the amount will be taken in due course.

Irish Poor Law Administration.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is intended to introduce any legislation during the present session to give effect to the Report of the Commission on the Irish Poor Law Administration, and in particular to deal with the grievances of the Irish Poor Law medical officers.

MR. BIRRELL: It is the intention of the Government to introduce legislation to amend the Irish Poor Laws, but I cannot hold out any hope that an opportunity will arise during the current session.

Irish Criminal Statistics.

MR. MOONEY (Newry): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to the fact that in the Judicial Statistics (Ireland), 1906 (Part I., Criminal Statistics), a new classification has been adopted and a new table inserted, under the heading Quasi-Criminal Offences, such offences being described as frequently leading up to more serious crimes; is he aware that the offences described under this head are of a non-indictable character, comprising such cases as offences against sanitary laws, maintenance orders, orders under The Employers' and Workmen Act, 1875, unsound meat, Infectious Disease Act, dog licences, dangerous and neglected structures, amounting in all to 21,979 applications, and that in the English and Scottish statistics such cases as these are not described as quasi-criminal, but are collected in the civil statistics; and, whether, in view of the fact that the insertion of these offences in the Criminal Statistics (Ireland) may give rise to a false estimate of the amount of crime in Ireland, he will take steps to ensure that in the next volume of statistics issued the ordinary practice will be adhered to, and offences such as described above be placed in the volume of civil statistics, as is the practice in England and Scotland.

MR. BIRRELL: The hon. Member's Question is founded upon a misapprehension of the facts. About the year 1892, the then Home Secretary appointed a Committee to revise the criminal portion of the Judicial Statistics of England and Wales, and, in accordance with the recommendations of this Committee, a new table was inserted in the statistics showing proceedings in quasi-criminal matters in courts of summary jurisdiction. In the year 1895 a precisely similar table was embodied in the Irish statistics. The same plan has since been followed in both countries. If the hon. Member will refer to the Judicial statistics, England and Wales, 1905 (Part I. Criminal Statistics), he will find in Table XIV. the precise counterpart of the Irish table referred to in the Question.

In reply to Mr. ARNOLD-FOSTER (Croydon)—

MR. BIRRELL said the table referred to quasi-criminal matters dealt with in courts of summary jurisdiction.

MR. MOONEY was understood to ask if the non-taking out of a dog licence was treated in the table as a criminal offence.

MR. BIRRELL: I will look into that.

Colthurst Estate Evicted Tenant.

MR. SHEEHAN (Cork County): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have received a claim for reinstatement from Matthew Twomey, evicted tenant on the Colthurst estate, Ballyvourney; and will this claim be inquired into before the final inspection of the estate takes place.

MR. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners received upwards of a year ago an application for reinstatement from the evicted tenant named, and after due inquiry decided that they could take no action in the case.

Naas Cattle-Drive.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether several policemen were injured in resisting a cattle-drive at Naas on 20th January; and whether any persons were arrested.

MR. BIRRELL: About one o'clock in the morning of 20th January a police patrol of two men found a party of thirty-five men in the act of driving cattle off a farm near Naas. The police endeavoured to identify the offenders and, while doing so, were assaulted and knocked down, but not seriously injured. No person has been arrested.

Gort Outrages.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has been furnished with particulars of two shooting outrages in the Gort district on 9th January; and whether the perpetrators have been discovered.

I beg also to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received particulars of a shooting outrage at Garryland, near Gort, on 8th January; and whether the police have made any arrests in connection with this occurrence.

MR. BIRRELL: The hon. Member appears to have inverted the dates of the offences referred to in these two questions. The offence of the 8th January was the subject of a question which the hon. Member put to me yesterday, namely, the firing at men who were felling trees on Lord Gough's property near Gort. On the night of 9th January shots were fired through the window of a room in Garryland Lodge, near Gort, and at the same time shots were fired at an engine-driver's hut at that place. In the absence of evidence, it has not been possible to make any arrests.

Loughrea Outrage.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that at Loughrea, on 8th January, the house of a labourer was attacked and two shots fired through the window; and whether any arrests took place in connection with the outrage.

MR. BIRRELL: On 7th January two shots were fired through the window of the house of Michael Callanan, labourer, Loughrea. The police have so far been unable to procure evidence which would justify an arrest.

Labourers Act in Ulster.

MR. J. DEVLIN (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he could state the number of applications received under the Labourers Act, and the number sanctioned by the Local Government Board, in the various counties in Ulster up to the end of December last; and the number of applications received, and the numbers approved of, for the provinces of Munster, Leinster, and Connaught, for the same term.

MR. BIRRELL: The Answer to this Question comprises long tabular statements of figures, and with the hon. Member's permission I will circulate a printed Answer with the Votes.

Irish Post Offices.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General how many instances there are in Ireland of post offices on licensed premises; and has the number been increased or diminished since 1st January, 1906.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I am obtaining the information desired by the hon. Member and will forward it to him in the course of a few days.

The Hague Conference.

MR. BOWLES: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether before signifying the adherence of this country to the decision of The Hague Peace Conference to establish an international Court of Naval Prize, His Majesty's Government intend to submit to this House, for its debate and decision thereon, the alterations thus proposed to be made in the Law of Nations as hitherto administered in this country. May I say we are all glad to see the right hon. Gentleman back in his place again.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): Thank you. I am advised that material changes will be necessary in our Home and Colonial Municipal Prize Laws before effect can be given to this Convention. His Majesty's Government hold themselves free to sign the Convention at any time, but it would be proper that the legislation to effect these changes should be sanctioned by Parliament before the Convention is ratified.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS (Kent, St. Augustine's), who took the opportunity to associate himself with the hon. Member for Norwood in expressing the pleasure with which they saw the right hon. Gentleman back in his place, asked the Prime Minister, in the event of the debate on the Address being concluded this week, what would be the business on Monday next.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: As far as we can estimate, it will be possible, and therefore desirable, to bring the discussion on the Address to an end on Thursday night. As the right hon. Gentleman's question refers to next week, perhaps I might ask him to repeat the question on Thursday, which is the usual day for giving information as to the business of the following week.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS hoped the right hon. Gentleman, before finally deciding to close the debate on the Address on Thursday, would consider three Motions to which the Opposition attached very considerable importance—the questions of a Minister of Commerce, the incidence of local taxation, and the state of the hop-growing industry.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: We have no desire to shut out the Motions to which the right hon. Gentleman refers; but, in the interests of the general convenience, we think it would be right that the debate on the Address should be finished on Thursday night.

*MR. CHAPLIN (Surrey, Wimbledon) pressed the right hon. Gentleman to allow at all events the question of the *status* of the Board of Trade to be raised. He assured the right hon. Gentleman that this was a matter on which immense interest was taken by the local authorities throughout the country.

MR. J. WARD reminded the Prime Minister that on the very first night of the session the debate could not be kept going the allotted time, and that last night the House was almost counted out.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: That, Sir, is the other side of the picture, which it is the duty of the Government to keep in view.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

Percy Archer Clive, esquire, for the County of Hereford (Southern or Ross Division).

NEW BILLS.

CORONERS' INQUESTS (RAILWAY FATALITIES) BILL.

"To amend the Law as to Coroners' Inquests in the case of Fatal Accidents on Railways, and for purposes relating thereto," presented by Sir Francis Channing; supported by Mr. Bell, Sir Charles Schwann, Mr. Hudson, Mr. Charles Nicholson, Mr. Tomkinson, and Mr. Massie; to be read a second time upon Friday, 8th May, and to be printed. [Bill 34.]

TELEGRAPH (CONSTRUCTION) BILL.

"To amend the Telegraph Acts, 1863 to 1907, with respect to the construction and maintenance of Telegraphic lines for Telephonic and other Telegraphic purposes," presented by Mr. Sydney Buxton; to be read a second upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 35.]

SCOTTISH LAND BILL.

"To establish a Department of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries in Scotland, and to amend the Law relating to agricultural holdings and allotments in Scotland," presented by Sir Edward Tennant; supported by Mr. Munro Ferguson; to be read a second time upon Friday, 21st February, and to be printed. [Bill 36.]

FEUS AND BUILDING LEASES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Feus and Leases for Building in Scotland," presented by Mr. Findlay; supported by Sir Andrew Torrance, Mr. Eugene Wason, Mr. Beale, Mr. Hodge, Mr. John Deans Hope, Mr. Laidlaw, Mr. Menzies, Mr Murray Macdonald, and Mr. Dundas White; to be read a second time upon Friday, 14th February, and to be printed. [Bill 37.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (TRANSFER OF POWERS OF STANDING JOINT COMMITTEES) BILL.

"To transfer to County Councils in England and Wales the powers and duties of the Standing Joint Committees," presented by Mr. Trevelyan; supported by Mr. Brigg and Mr. Adkins; to be read a second time upon Friday, 1st May, and to be printed. [Bill 38.]

CORONERS' INQUESTS BILL.

"To dispense with the compulsory viewing of bodies on the holding of Coroners' Inquests," presented by Mr. Higham; supported by Mr. Luke White, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Mr. Summerbell, Mr. Toulmin, and Mr. Cameron; to be read a second time upon Friday, 3rd April, and to be printed. [Bill 39.]

BALLOT ACT (1872) AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend The Ballot Act, 1872, and to provide for the taking of a second ballot at parliamentary and other elections," presented by Mr. Higham; supported by Mr. Dunn, Mr. Rowlands, Dr. Shipman, Mr. Clough, Sir Maurice Levy, and Mr. Fenwick; to be read a second time upon Friday, 24th April, and to be printed. [Bill 40.]

POLICE SUPERANNUATION BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to the Superannuation of the Police," presented by Mr. Samuel Roberts; to be read a second time upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 41.]

INFANT LIFE PROTECTION BILL.

"To amend The Infant Life Protection Act, 1897," presented by Mr. Staveley-Hill; supported by Mr. Lee, Mr. Hay, Mr. Hills, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, and Mr. Nicholls; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 10th March, and to be printed. [Bill 42.]

DAYLIGHT SAVING BILL.

"To promote the earlier use of Daylight in certain months yearly; and for other purposes relating thereto," presented by Mr. Robert Pearce; supported by Sir William Bull and Mr. Hornman; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 43.]

THE LISBON MURDERS.

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I rise for the purpose of moving the Resolution which stands in my name on the Paper with regard to the terrible catastrophe which has just occurred in Lisbon. It runs as follows: "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty to convey to His Majesty the expression of the indignation and deep concern with which this House has learned the assassination of His Majesty's ancient ally and friend His Majesty the King of Portugal and the Algarves, and of His Royal Highness the Duke of Braganza; and to pray His Majesty that he will be graciously pleased to express to His Majesty the present King, on the part of this House, his faithful Commons, their abhorrence of the crime and their sympathy with the Royal Family of Portugal and with the people of that country." Sir, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to find words adequate to express the horror and indignation with which the news of this mad, revolting crime was received throughout the civilised world. And I think the House will agree entirely with me when I say that there are reasons which make that feeling even more intense, and cause a more genuine commingling with it, of regret and sympathy in this country than anywhere else. The scene indeed is, I believe, almost without parallel in history. The main street of a great city is filled on a quiet afternoon with the usual crowd of peaceable and busy citizens. A carriage drives up containing the members of the Royal Family on their way to resume residence in their home in the capital—a family conspicuous for the qualities of affability, accessibility to all, and for the affection with which they are regarded by all who come in contact with them. Suddenly an assault is made by a group of assassins, and the King, the manly, friendly, kindly King, a man of high intelligence and of great accomplishment, a man devoted to his people and to his duty, is smitten to death as he sits, and together with him his son, so full of youthful hope and promise. Such a scene brings shame upon the human race, and that shame is only, alas! partially redeemed by the calm courage displayed by a noble woman. It is no wonder that this foul deed has been regarded with execration everywhere; but, as I have said, there are reasons in this country why it should particularly and peculiarly concern us. For Portugal is our traditional friend—the traditional friend of the British people. The King was the close ally and the undoubted friend of our Sovereign, and the stricken Queen was born and brought up within our shores; and if it is not too much to say, I think I may be permitted to do so, that in a large part of her associations and in her heart's affections and sympathies, she may be said to be English. We wish to let the widowed Queen know, we wish to let the young King, summoned amid such tragic circumstances to take so high a place in his country, know, and we wish the whole people of Portugal to know, that nowhere are there better well-wishers and keener sympathisers with them than in this House of Commons. It is for that purpose I move this Resolution.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS (Kent, St. Augustine's): I rise, Sir, according to precedent, to second the Resolution moved by the Prime Minister. I am sure that the Prime Minister has given expression to the universal feeling of indignation which exists in this House at the dastardly crime which has caused the death of the King of Portugal and of the Duke of Braganza, the Heir-Apparent. It would not be necessary to add anything to the eloquent language which has been used by the Prime Minister were it not that I am anxious to emphasise the unanimity which prevails in this House of abhorrence of the crime, of its sympathy with the Royal family of Portugal, and with the people of that country. Nowhere in the world will these cruel and senseless assassinations be viewed with greater indignation than in this country. Not only was King Carlos related to our Royal Family, not only was his Royal Consort born in this country, but he had made himself a familiar, and I may say a popular, figure to many of our citizens, at all events in the Metropolis. By his general intelligence, by his manly bearing, by his genial courtesy, by his true sportsmanship, and by his loyalty and his unswerving friendship to this country, shown during the whole period of his reign, he had cemented that traditional alliance between the two countries which no passing cloud of misunderstanding ever unsettled, which proved to be so advantageous to this country, and which it is the desire of every patriotic Englishman long to maintain. We deplore the loss which Portugal has sustained, and we express by this Resolution our abhorrence of the crime which brought it about—a crime which is as brutal as it is useless. Our heartfelt sympathy goes out in its fullest measure to the Queen of Portugal, whose splendid courage we must all admire, to Portugal's new Monarch, Manuel II., on whose shoulders at so early an age and in so tragic a manner the burden of kingdom has been so suddenly placed. We trust that all that stands in Portugal for good government may rally round the youthful King, who has with so much touching candour admitted his want of knowledge and experience, and has appealed to his statesmen for guidance and advice.

Resolved, *Nemine Contradicente*, That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty to convey to His Majesty the expression of the indignation and deep concern with which this House has learned the assassination of His Majesty's ancient ally and friend His Majesty the King of Portugal and the Algarves, and of His Royal Highness the Duke of Braganza; and to pray His Majesty that he will be graciously pleased to express to His Majesty the present King, on the part of this House, his faithful Commons, their abhorrence of the crime and their sympathy with the Royal Family of Portugal and with the people of that country.—(*Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.*)

To be presented by Privy Councillors and Members of His Majesty's Household.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment [3rd February] to Main Question [29th January], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Lehmann.*)

Which Amendment was—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'But humbly express our regret that Your Majesty's advisers have failed to refer to the increase of agrarian crime and disorder in Ireland, or to give any assurance as to the adoption of measures for the better protection of the lives and properties of Your Majesty's subjects, and for the repression of lawlessness and intimidation in that part of Your Majesty's Dominions.'"—(*Mr. Long.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

*MR. CHAPLIN (Surrey, Wimbledon): In the observations I was making last night when by the rules of this House the debate stood adjourned, I was dealing with the condition of Ireland and the attitude of the Chief Secretary in regard to it. This afternoon, if I may, I wish to allude to the statement made not many days ago by the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he put this question—"What is the charge, after all, against the Chief Secretary?" But it is not a charge against the Chief Secretary alone by any means—but against his colleagues in the Cabinet as well. The Foreign Secretary and the Chancellor of the Exchequer had announced their unreserved support of the Chief Secretary, not only for what he had done in Ireland, but for everything that he had abstained from doing, and the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer took opportunity on that occasion to utter some very valiant words of his own with regard to cattle-driving in Ireland and the action to be taken with regard to it. For not only did he denounce cattle-driving itself in scathing terms, he spoke of it as one of the most reprehensible, criminal and mischievous practices in Ireland at the present time; but he assurred the public in emphatic words that—"It must be put down, and put down it should be."

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.) And it has been.

*MR. CHAPLIN: No, it has not been put down, as the right hon. Gentleman will learn if he will consult the information available to him as well as to me, and certainly by no action of the Government. Cattle-driving, I admit, has undergone a considerable lull—with an intention which I will not characterise and of which I do not know the secret; but it is a fact that almost immediately after the right hon. Gentleman made his bold, outspoken statement of the intentions of the Government his speech was followed by a cattle-drive on one of the largest scales yet known. I have information, too, before me from sources which I am assured can be relied upon, showing that not only does cattle-driving exist to-day in different parts of Ireland, but it has extended from animals grazing in the fields to cattle which are stored in the homesteads. I find it stated in *The Times* on 30th January that fifty animals were taken out of farm buidings on one occasion and driven away, and this in spite of all the declarations and pledges given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the members of the Cabinet. Did the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary say that that was an inaccurate statement?

MR. BIRRELL: I said I had not heard of the transaction.

*MR. CHAPLIN: It is very strange, and I am afraid the right hon. Gentleman's information as to cattle-driving is not all that we could wish. I take it from the charge of one of the Judges in Ireland, and it is confirmed by hon. Gentlemen who are well informed on these matters — from gentlemen who, when many months ago they warned the Chief Secretary as to the then condition of Ireland and what it would lead to, were derided and ridiculed by him.

MR. BIRRELL: I did nothing of the kind.

*MR. CHAPLIN: That is a question of the interpretation to be put upon the language which he used.

MR. BIRRELL: I did not.

*MR. CHAPLIN: Again I say, it is a matter of opinion, and it is my interpretation of his language when he described hon. Gentlemen on this side, with far better knowledge of the country than himself, as "carrion crows." Was that ridicule or was it not? At all events I am entitled to say this: when he took office the Chief Secretary has admitted that Ireland was more peaceful than at any time during the previous 600 years, and he ridiculed the men who warned him that he was mistaken in this view. But last night he had to come down and admit to a crowded House of Commons that the condition of Ireland during his tenure of office has been converted from a peaceful condition to one which even he looked upon with grave and constant anxiety. And, as I have said, although the Chancellor of the Exchequer assured the English public before Parliament met that cattle-driving should be put down we find that the practice had been actually extended from grazing cattle to stall-fed cattle in the homesteads. The right hon. Gentleman says it is absolutely untrue. I hope it is untrue, and, if it is, I shall be justified in having raised the question, because it has given the right hon. Gentleman an opportunity of contradicting the statement. I will read the report—

"At Navan Quarter Sessions, yesterday, his Honour Judge Curran delivered judgment in an application for compensation for malicious injury arising out of a cattle-drive which took place in County Meath in November last. From the evidence it appeared that fifty-nine fat cattle, the property of Mr. William McKeever, were taken from the stalls where they had been penned for three weeks, were driven in various directions through the country, and were not recovered until the following morning. Judge Curran said the act was a most outrageous one."

MR. ASQUITH: What was the date of the occurrence?

*MR. CHAPLIN: This is reported in *The Times* of 30th January. The date of the occurrence was November last.

MR. ASQUITH was understood to say that he was not aware of the occurrence at the time he spoke.

*MR. CHAPLIN: I apologise if I have in any way misquoted the right hon. Gentleman. Was not he aware of it at the time he made the statement?

MR. ASQUITH: No.

*MR. CHAPLIN: No. Then the case was worse than he supposed, and there were additional reasons which he was not aware of for his emphatic declaration at the time he made it, viz., "that it must be put down, and put down it should be," one reason being that cattle-driving has been applied for a long time it seems—although the right hon. Gentleman has never had the information—to cattle in stalls. In this case fifty animals had been taken from their stalls by violence, and yet we have been told by Gentlemen opposite, and some of their warm supporters in that part of the House [pointing to the Nationalist Benches] that cattle-driving is a harmless offence, and that there was no case known of injury having been done to animals driven in this way. But to put down cattle-driving is the one thing that the right hon. Gentleman has not done; it is the very thing which he has abstained altogether from doing. That is perfectly evident, because it continues in a modified degree even still; and I am unable to reconcile the declarations and the pledges given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer with his unreserved support of the Chief Secretary in abstaining from doing the very thing which he undertook and unreservedly promised the Government should do. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, however, fell back on general disorder in Ireland, and there he made the rather ridiculous statement that the speech of the Leader of the Opposition on the first night of the debate was a caricature of the condition of Ireland. I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer will find it somewhat difficult when he speaks to-night to prove it. I affirm from the information which is public property everywhere, that there has been constant open defiance of the law, and almost daily contempt of the law in Ireland, and that the country in that respect is worse at the present moment than I ever remember it. [MINISTERIAL Cries of "Oh!"] Hon. Members say "Oh!" It is true that as regards violent crimes we have not now anything like the murders which have been committed in Ireland. Are we to wait for wholesale murder in that country before the law is vindicated and law and order maintained? My observation was limited to this—and I challenge contradiction—that with regard to open, glaring defiance and daily contempt of the law in that country, the condition of Ireland was never more grave than it is at the present time. The figures given by the right hon. Gentleman last night were in themselves sufficient to contradict the Chancellor of the Exchequer's assertion that our statements and the statements in the Press are caricatures. What about the increase in outrages by firearms? They have grown enormously since the time that Ireland was represented as being in an exceptionally peaceful condition. Why does not the right hon. Gentleman try to reply to the powerful and able speech of the hon. Member for Cambridge University last night? That speech was plain, frank, and outspoken, and, I believe, absolutely true. Let the Chancellor of the Exchequer answer that speech if he can. [Laughter.] It is all very well for people to laugh, but it is a speech which requires a reply, and if it is not replied to—and nobody so far has attempted to reply to it—it is because it is true and cannot be answered and I am justified in my statements. But if the right hon. Gentleman is not satisfied with statements that come from us on this side of the House, what has he to say of the charges of Judges in Ireland? I am very sure that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be the last man in this House to impugn the impartiality or to ridicule the gravity of the statements that have been made by the Judges in Ireland in their charges to juries. [NATIONALIST laughter.] I am quite sure that the laughter I hear below the Gangway is not joined in by the members of His Majesty's Government. I shall wait with great interest to know how much or how little of these charges has been brought to the attention of the members of the Government, apart from the Chief Secretary, whose special duty it is, to attend to them. I think I have seen them all, and statements of greater gravity it has never been my misfortune to read or consider, during all the years I have been in Parliament, although in former years I do remember that very grave statements came again and again from the Judges in Ireland at that time. I do not wish to dwell on them at undue length, but I must remind right hon. Gentlemen opposite that in this particular case they are the incriminated parties themselves. They are the defendants at this moment in the action which has been brought against them by my right hon. friend, and we naturally attribute more importance to the evidence of the witnesses whom we believe to be absolutely impartial, for they have nothing to make them otherwise. We give to it more importance than we do to the descriptions which the right hon. Gentleman gives to this House in defence of his colleagues and himself. The Judges have month by month depicted the condition of Ireland as going from bad to worse, without the smallest effect whatever on the attitude of the Government. In his address to the grand jury at Longford a few days ago, Judge Curran said that in October last he referred to the persistent and long-continued conspiracy against certain individuals in the hope that the authorities would put an end to this persecution, and afford those unfortunate people some protection. I suppose that came under the notice of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. I assume by his silence that that is absolutely correct. What did the Government do? One would have thought that any English Government would have taken some action on this statement. But the Judge goes on to say—

> "But he found that not a finger had been raised and not a movement had been made by the authorities for the defence and protection of those individuals. He found that since the last Quarter Sessions there had been twenty-six cases of boycotting, affecting fifty-one individuals."

And yet the Chief Secretary last night only made most fervid declarations upon the cruelty and wickedness of boycotting—

> "There is nothing in the world," he said, "that I would not do to put an end to this abominable practice of boycotting."

Yes, Sir. But he forgets there is one thing which we say he will not do, and that is to take the one effective method which other Governments have used, viz., to employ all the powers of the law at his disposal. The right hon. Gentleman stands convicted by his own words. Since he came into office there has been a steady recrudescence of boycotting, and under the influence of the Land League it is spreading rapidly to-day.

AN HON. MEMBER: Was there no boycotting during the last Government?

*MR. CHAPLIN: In nothing like the same proportion it has reached since the right hon. Gentleman came into office, and we have it from the Chief Secretary that after many years of Unionist Government, that Ireland was more peaceful than it had ever been before. But the right hon. Gentleman says that, "The Crimes Act would be ineffective." Why? It was effective before. Why is it that other people have been able to put Ireland in a peaceful condition, and how and why is it that the right hon. Gentleman has only succeeded in converting vast districts of Ireland into hot-beds of sedition and crime, during the few months in which he has held office? I might refer to any number of charges from other Judges, and Heaven knows there is enough in them to make the hair of hon. Members in the House stand on end! But I will not, and all I will ask is to go back for one single moment, if I may, to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and cattle-driving. In connection with the sudden outburst of this new form of outrages the right hon. Gentleman made a very remarkable statement which struck me greatly at all events and which I cut out at the time. I suppose the right hon. Gentleman is accurately reported, but in the report he says—

> "Cattle-driving was only a manifestation of something else of which the Government was bound to take notice. We believe that when we see manifestations of this kind going on over a considerable part of Ireland, undoubtedly it will be your first duty to enforce the law to protect property and to maintain order."

But that is the very thing you have not done. It is his own declaration.

MR. ASQUITH: Whose declaration?

*MR. CHAPLIN: The right hon. Gentleman's. Here are his own words, and how can he get away from them?—

> "It will be your first duty to enforce the law to protect property and to maintain order."

And yet he and his colleagues allow 400 cattle-drives to be made in one year and with impunity—a state of things which the right hon. Gentleman has described as a most reprehensible, most criminal, and most mischievous form of outrage; and the whole time neglecting what he himself has declared to be their first and primary duty. But I go on a bit further. The right hon. Gentleman says—

> "You cannot brush such manifestations aside as if they were meaningless, motiveless horseplay. . . . We must find something in the social and economical conditions of which they are the deplorable outcome to find something which appears to palliate the illegal conduct of these men."

MR. ASQUITH: I said "not to palliate."

*MR. CHAPLIN: I am delighted to hear it. I could not conceive that the right hon. Gentleman meant to palliate such proceedings.

MR. ASQUITH: I used the word "not," but it has been omitted from the report.

*MR. CHAPLIN: That is one of the misfortunes from which a great many of us suffer in these days, though the right hon. Gentleman not so much as others perhaps, from his distinguished position. And then the right hon. Gentleman goes on to describe what that something else is; and what does it amount to? It is the desire of a great number of the population of Ireland to get untenanted land. It is not an uncommon desire of a great portion of humanity to get possession of what belongs to somebody else; but I do not understand that that would in any way justify the attitude of the Government. But apart from that, the right hon. Gentleman forgets that that something else which he has found was in existence when his Government came into office. Probably Ireland has never been free from it. But if it was in existence when Ireland was so transcendentally peaceful, is it not perfectly obvious that this sudden recrudescence of disorder and outrage must have been due to something totally different? The Chief Secretary found Ireland in that position of peacefulness which made him contrast his happy lot so thankfully with that of so many of his predecessors. No, this recrudescence of crime was due to something totally different. What was it? I can only give my own personal impression from a careful study of the condition of Ireland, which I have always watched with the deepest interest; and I have no doubt as to the original cause. It was a most uncalled-for and peculiarly foolish statement of the Minister newly appointed to office and who had not then acquired probably all the knowledge of Ireland which was essential to the discharge of his duty. The right hon. Gentleman took an early opportunity of saying in this House that whatever might happen in Ireland, so far as he was concerned hon. Members from Ireland might take it that the Crimes Act would not be made use of, and that

that Act itself might be considered dead and buried so long as this Government continued in power. That was all very well. But it was news to a great many people in Ireland, and it spread throughout the whole of the country like wild-fire. The Irish people discovered that they were again confronted with a Minister and Government who had neither the courage nor the nerve to enforce the law and do their duty. They were told over and over again, and were allowed to believe, that they had the secret support of many of the members of the Government in cattle-driving, and that those who were the first to drive the cattle would be the first to get the land. When they were told that by Members of this House against whom the right hon. Gentleman never took a single step—when the right hon. Gentleman allowed these Members of Parliament to preach these doctrines all over the district and left the inciters to crime, the real authors of the mischief, to go free — when it was only by the action of one of the Judges who had more courage and determination than the right hon. Gentleman had, that one of them was at last imprisoned, —this mistaken action in the first instance among so excitable a people as the Irish, was more than sufficient to create that condition of things in Ireland which so unhappily prevails to-day. No reply worthy of acceptance has been made from the benches opposite up to the present moment to the charges made by the Judges and to the Amendment moved by my right hon. friend. The Government may rely upon it that their unfortunate action in these respects sooner or later will inevitably re-act upon themselves, and I am inclined to think that the right hon. Gentleman has found that out for himself and that he has great fears for the future. The right hon. Gentleman dwelt the other night upon the difficulties of the congested districts, he spoke, indeed, in terms which betrayed his deep anxiety whether it would be possible really to regenerate or to improve and alter the condition of the people in certain parts of Ireland, and to bring about a new state of things, in order to relieve the congested districts. I gather that from one statement in which he referred to a question which was sometimes asked, as follows: "Did not God make the Irish land for the Irish people?" "Yes," he said, "but what do you mean by that? Is the land of Mayo, is the land of Roscommon made for the people of Ireland?" There I think the right hon. Gentleman pointed and with perfect truth to a difficulty which is bound and certain to await him, which, except on one condition, will, I believe, defeat him in all his schemes for dealing with the great problem of congestion in the future, and that condition is that he teaches by his example and his action the Irish people to believe and know that both by him and by his colleagues the primary duty of a Government, so long neglected, the duty of maintaining law and order will be unflinchingly observed. Whatever your desires and wishes may be for the improvement of the congested districts, you have no warmer sympathiser than I am in regard to them. I remember advocating myself years ago that the only remedies for the congested districts were two things—migration wherever it was possible, but accompanied by something else, and that was emigration. Migration alone I do not think can ever be a remedy sufficient for the existing condition of things, but if there were in addition some carefully and well considered system of emigration, for which there are great openings in the Colonies, I do think that in that direction something real and practical could be done. I always thought that was the chief and best feature of Mr. Gladstone's Land Act of 1881, but, unfortunately, it was the one part of his Bill to which the least attention was given after it had become law, and I do not think that anything practical in this direction was ever attempted at all. I am afraid that nothing they have said to us to-night or last night can exonerate this Government from the charge which my right hon. friend made against them by the Motion which he placed upon the Table last night. You succeeded, on your own admission, to the government of Ireland when the country was in a most exceptionally peaceful condition, and in less than twelve months you have converted it, in many of its districts, into what it is no exaggeration to describe—I think this is language used by some of the Judges, though I would not pledge myself to that without further reference to their

Mr. Chaplin.

statements—as nothing but hot beds of disorder and sedition at the present time. You stand convicted of this, having all the time at your hands ready for use at any moment the means and the power of maintaining order, preserving peace, and of giving the protection of the law and of equal and impartial justice to every single subject of the King in Ireland, without the least distinction; you have failed—wilfully and deliberately as we think, failed to do it. What reply have you to give to the challenge across this Table by the hon. Member for the University of Cambridge last night, when he said that at this moment there are two laws in Ireland, viz: the law of the United Irish League; and the law of the King, and, unhappily we have too much reason to believe that under the reign of the right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues on that bench, in the vast majority of cases, many of them utterly unknown to you, many of them never reaching the people of England in the smallest degree, it is the law of the Land League and not the law of the King which prevails in Ireland to-day. I have never heard it denied and I believe it is true that in many cases even now under the rule of the right hon. Gentleman the writ of the King does not run. It is upon that count that you are tried to-day; it is on that count you will be judged and be convicted, whenever you have the courage to appeal to a tribunal other than this, namely, the people of this country.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said the speech to which they had just listened very patiently, was a very fitting episode in a somewhat remarkable debate. He had a very great respect and regard for the right hon. Gentleman and he hoped he would not consider it offensive on his part if he said that his Parliamentary oratory always seemed to him to play the same part in literature that monumental sculpture did in other phases of art. His language was leisurely and lofty and slightly complex and he thought to-day that he gave the *coup de grace* to one of the most moribund debates the House of Commons had ever listened to. He had had the advantage of hearing the right hon. Gentleman so often that his speeches were already known to him before he delivered them. For instance, he knew that one of the things that he would say was that the great misfortune to Ireland was to have a weak Radical Government. He agreed with him, but he should state that the converse of that proposition was quite true, that the most squeezable of all Governments and therefore the most useful for Ireland, was a weak Tory Government. He also knew that the right hon. Gentleman would say that the land hunger of Ireland was due to the effect of the selfish commercial policy of this country in the 17th century. He entirely agreed with the right hon. Gentleman, but he immediately added that he missed from his speech some of the picturesque illustrations with which he had heard him adorn it on previous occasions. The right. hon. Gentleman was not satisfied then with saying that it was the selfish commercial instincts of this country in the 17th century that destroyed Ireland. He said it was the selfish commercial instincts of the Chamberlains' and the Collings' of the 17th century that produced land hunger. Since that time these two distinguished colleagues of his, who figured so largely in his former orations, had purified themselves from all charges of selfishness by accepting tariff reform. For himself he called this the most remarkable debate he had ever heard. A debate heralded with a greater amount of blazonings, trumpetings and Press preliminaries he had never known. It had been prepared and heralded by a most mendacious Press campaign, and he had never known an Irish Minister pursued with such a ruthless and merciless attack as the present Chief Secretary. And what had happened to this debate so loudly heralded? It began with the speech of the right hon. Member for South Dublin. The speeches of the right hon. Gentleman always left something to be desired on the score of lucidity and what he might call political wisdom, but they had always a boisterousne s and vigour, but his speech on this occasion was made in a state of apparently mental and physical depression; in fact, the right hon. Gentleman made one of the weakest speeches he ever heard uttered in this House. When he considered the right hon. Gentleman's policy he was reminded of an American humorist who, alluding to another gentleman, said, "If he had a little more sense he would actually be half-witted," and if the policy of the right hon. Gentleman, had only a little more sense it would actually be half-witted. What was complained of in regard to the Chief Secretary was his weakness, his want of nerve and his failure. That was not the real charge; that was not the real reason that inspired murmurs from above the gangway. The real reason for mournful and funereal utterances was that the Chief Secretary had been strong, courageous, and successful. He suggested to right hon. and hon. Gentlemen above the gangway that their imaginations were a little wanting in artistic reserve and moderation. Whenever they started a campaign of this kind in the future he would advise them to indulge in a little less exaggeration of language than a great many of them, and some of their Leaders indulged in. The Marquess of Lansdowne, speaking in another place, spoke of Macedonia and Ireland in the same breath and marked the recurring note and refrain in all these articles and speeches. It had occurred so often that really it seemed to him that they were all formed upon the same model. The noble Lord said that the only places in Europe to-day where they could find any analogy to the state of Ireland were Russia and Turkey, and that idea ran through his speech. His Lordship said that he had seen it stated that in Macedonia in the course of four years there had been 10,000 deaths from violent causes in the villayets. Then he went on to refer to Ireland, and he said it was somewhat remarkable that there should be a complete omission from the Speech from the Throne of any reference to a matter which concerned us much more nearly than others, viz., the condition of a part of the United Kingdom itself. He suggested that the Macedonian paragraph might with a slight verbal alteration have met the case and that it might have read: "The condition of the population in several important Irish counties shows no improvement. Bands instigated by Nationalist Members continue to pursue a campaign of violence and the situation gives serious cause for anxiety." That was the kind of language to which he (Mr. O'Connor) was alluding. In a well-known journal he also found the following quotation—

> "The Cabinet are engaged in pressing reforms upon the Sultan with regard to the most disturbed portion of his distressed dominions. It is Sir Edward Grey's official duty to lament the state of things in Macedonia, to point out the absence of security for property, the necessity for an effective administration of justice, the evils following from the want of all settled sense of public order. Abdul Hamid and his advisers are tolerably well-informed as to the contents of the foreign Press, and from the point of view of poetic justice he would be unanswerable if he caused the Sublime Porte to address a note to Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's Government calling attention to the notorious and disgraceful conditions of lawless misgovernment agrarian outrage and political brigandage existing in the Hibernian province of the British Empire."

[OPPOSITION cheers]. That observation was cheered and adopted by hon. Gentlemen above the gangway; that Ireland was in the same state as Macedonia. In Macedonia, according to Lord Lansdowne, and unfortunately he was speaking accurately, there had been in four years 10,000 murders. Ireland was in the same position, yet within the last twelve months there had been not 10,000 or 1,000, there had not been one agrarian murder. The unfortunate thing for hon. Gentlemen above the gangway was that facts had a most inconvenient and almost disloyal way of contradicting their statements. Industries, it was said, were dying, and the very next year it was found that, according to the lying statistics, that industries were never so flourishing. Ireland was in a state of crime and disorder, and the statistics proved in the face of these lying calumnies that Ireland was an absolutely crimeless country. He attached some importance to these campaigns of calumny by one country against another, or a certain portion of the people against another. Calumny of this kind played a very important part in the history of many countries. It was the mendacity of Marat that created the Reign of Terror; it was the mutilating of a despatch that led to the Franco-German War. Why was this campaign started in Ireland, or rather what was the result of it? Every honest high-minded and broad-minded man in England, every high and broad-minded man in Ireland considered it his duty at this moment so far as he could to put an end to the secular struggle and hatred between the mass of the English and the Irish people. It was a blessed, noble, and beneficent work for both peoples, and at the moment when that process was going on more rapidly than many persons could appreciate the gentlemen of whom he complained came forward and did equal injustice to both countries. They aroused the just anger of the people of England by representing the Irish as being a nation of murderers. They created prejudice and hatred in the English people by these false speeches, and in the hearts of the Irish people they created the feeling that if such a campaign could be carried on successfully against their country the English people must be reckoned as an incurable and ignorant enemy whose campaign of calumny could only arouse sentiments of contempt in Ireland. Therefore, these missionaries of Empire, these gentlemen who were so anxious to gather and knit together in bonds of love all the various parts of the Empire, were doing their best to open up the gulf of ignorance and misunderstanding and hatred which he had hoped was being healed between England and Ireland. Hon. Gentlemen were not satisfied with comparing Ireland with Macedonia; they said that Ireland to-day was in a worse state than ever before, and the assertion was made in the face of facts that must be known to some of the Gentlemen who made the statement. He could not excuse the right. hon. Gentleman who spoke last of making the statement that Ireland was worse than it had ever been. Lord Londonderry in the other House when rebuked by the Lord Chancellor for making a similar statement said he was not talking of crime but the demoralisation of the Government. So that when hon. Gentlemen talked of gigantic crime in Ireland, what was really meant was the demoralisation of the Chief Secretary. But there was cattle-driving in Ireland and the refusal of juries to convict. There was cattle-driving, but no crime as he understood it. He did not deny that cattle-driving was a very grave symptom which must have given the Chief Secretary many hours of anxiety. It gave others besides the right hon. Gentleman many hours of anxiety. How was the Chief Secretary to deal with it? It was said that the right hon. Gentleman should have dealt with it as the right hon. Member for South Dublin suggested—by coercion. He should have adopted the Act which the right hon. Gentleman himself helped to pass in the year of the jubilee of the late Queen as a sign of the extreme love and loyalty of the people. But what would have been the effect of that? If the right hon. Gentleman had used coercion it would have meant, as the hon. Member for Cork said last night, not a comparatively small outbreak of disorder, but if it had not extended all over Ireland, it would have spread enormously from county to county; and cattle-driving instead of being the isolated action of individuals would have become the duty of every man in the country. If Members of Parliament were sent to prison dozens would be sent after them, and the result of it all would have been that Ireland would have been in the condition of chaos and anarchy that it was now described to be under the administration of the Chief Secretary. What would have been the effect in this country on the Government and on this House? The President of the Local Government Board recently said that there was in this House to-day the greatest instrument of progress that the world had seen since the day of the French Revolution. He agreed with that statement. Supposing this democratic Ministry with this democratic Parliament had used coercion, what would it have meant? It would have resulted in the bankruptcy of democracy in this country; and that was the reason hon. Gentlemen above the gangway wanted it. Democratic Governments were the children of hope, Tory Governments the children of disappointment, preyed upon by privilege and caste. The hope of hon. Gentlemen above the gangway was that if they could have driven the right hon. Gentlemen into coercion they would have been able to have gone to the constituencies and said, "Look at the sincerity of the Liberal Party. They declared against coercion for twenty years, and within two years of coming into office they adopted the policy and found that coercion was the only means for governing Ireland." They would have in that way have disparaged and humiliated the Liberal Party in the country. The attempt to get the Chief Secretary to adopt a policy of coercion was not merely a conspiracy against the masses of Ireland, but a conspiracy against the masses of England. He understood that the hon. Member for East Marylebone was going to follow. He was an opponent worthy of any man's steel, and he thought he had treated him with chivalry as such an opponent deserved to be, because he had told him what he was going to say. On the question of boycotting he had told him that he was going to read the following quotation from Lord Salisbury—

> "I have seen plenty of suggestions that the Government are to blame because they have allowed the Crimes Act not to be renewed. Are you quite certain that the Crimes Act would have prevented what is taking place? Do not imagine that the effect of the Crimes Act has been very much exaggerated. While it was in existence there grew up a real danger, out of which boycotting proceeded. Then grew up a thousand branches of the National League all over Ireland. I have seen it said that the Crimes Act diminished outrages, and that boycotting operated through the outrages, and therefore the Crimes Act diminished boycotting. That is untrue. The Crimes Act did not diminish outrages. Boycotting is a crime of a character which legislation has very great difficulty in reaching. It is similar to the excommunication and interdict of which we have read in the Middle Ages."

He did not think it was necessary to go so far back as the Middle Ages for specimens of boycotting even in England—boycott of the living, boycott of the dust of the silent dead. They might have come from the Tariff Reform League, or from Hereford, where they were mainly engaged in the discussion of the hop industry. "The unemployed, whence come they?" was the title of a pamphlet in which the following passages occurred in reference to the hop industry—

> "This is a branch of agriculture which requires more capital and employs more labour per acre than any other. It is carried on principally in the counties surrounding London, and thus any reduction in plantation (which means the throwing out of work of large numbers of young men) causes the influx into the City of London of a great many in search of work; they are there preferred to the town dweller, who is accordingly displaced, and thus goes to swell the ranks of the unemployed."

The pamphlet went on to say—

> "The following incident illustrates this. Edward Webb, of Worsley, one of the largest hop merchants in the Midlands, a large manure manufacturer and seed merchant whose interests would naturally be supposed to be identical with the hop grower, yet, his connections with the brewers were of so much more importance to him that he actually addressed a circular to them advising them to refrain from buying, in order to force down the market. So incensed were the Worcester farmers that they overturned his stand in the market, and jostled him out—treatment he richly deserved from the farmers' point of view."

It was that kind of literature which partly accounted for the recent victory. His hon. friend the Member for Donegal had put into his hand an essay by Lord John Russell, on the English Government and Constitution, from the reign of Henry VII. to the present time, and in it he found this passage—

> "Thus, not only are juries in fact the real judges in England, but they possess a power no judge would venture to exercise, namely, that of refusing to put the law in force. Undoubtedly this is a very dangerous power, more especially as juries, consulting in secret, deciding without reason assigned and separating without being afterwards responsible, are free from all control but that of their own consciences; yet exercised as it has been with temper and moderation the discretion of juries has proved extremely salutary. It has been the cause of amending many bad laws which judges would have administered with exact severity and defended with professional bigotry; and above all it has this important and useful consequence, that laws totally repugnant to the feelings of the community for which they are made cannot long prevail in England."

To-day the name of Tyburn Tree brought thoughts of boys and girls hanged for stealing pocket-handkerchiefs; of men hanged for the stealing of sheep; and if these things no longer happened, to what was it due? Was it due to the action of Ministers or of Judges? No, it was due to the juries who refused to convict. And then let him not forget that they had in London lately a jury that was almost a gallery of popular heroes. They had also witnesses who were almost a chamber of horrors. He did not say that because he blamed the juries. He thought it was an honourable and necessary instinct of juries to watch closely the administration of the law. Otherwise what chance would there be for poverty standing in the dock, friendless, discredited, without money to fee a lawyer? He wondered what would have become of Wood if he had not been able, with the generous help of his employers' long purse, to fee Mr. Marshall Hall? And now he came to cattle-driving. What was the origin of it? It had been described as something modern, but that was not the case. Dean Swift wrote that in the circumstances which the peasantry of the West of Ireland had to face, sheep were the most dangerous enemies of man, and that they should be treated in the same way as Don Quixote treated them. It would be remembered that from the North of Ireland there had been a good deal more "people-driving" as distinguished from cattle-driving. Such things brought their own Nemesis. He was reminded of a personal experience. One of the friends he knew in America was the late Mr. Blane, the most popular figure in America, next to President Roosevelt, since Abraham Lincoln. He had a haunting feeling that there was something strangely familiar in him when conversing with him, and at last it struck him. He said to him: "Do you know that you have an Ulster accent?" Mr. Blane said, "I have never been told that before." But he had an Ulster accent. And why? He had it because his great-grandfather was an Ulster man, and because a large Ulster colony had settled down in that part of Pennsylvania from which he came. And that colony was still there as was said in the Irish Parliament by the Earl of Mountjoy, the men who encouraged and aided and helped Washington, who cheered him in the hours of gloom, who nerved him in the hours of disappointment, who were the foremost generals of his army and the most fearless admirals of his fleet—the men who created and maintained the American revolution, were the sons of the Ulster men, whom the Party represented to-day by gentlemen above the gangway had forced out of their own country. One of his earliest recollections as a boy was the name of Allan Pollock, a gentleman who amassed a fortune in Glasgow. He went to Ireland when that country was crushed and bleeding from every pore, when people were lying dead from hunger by the side of the roadside in a land of plenty, and he uttered the dictum, that Ireland would be a beautiful country but for the people. That was at that time the universal doctrine of British statesmanship. The one thing in the fifties and sixties which was preached in Parliament was that the cure for all Ireland's ills was to get rid of the Celt and to put the Saxon in his place. That led to a great many poignant tragedies. He was not surprised that the Chief Secretary resented the statement that he regarded Ireland as a joke. Ireland was so much of a tragedy that it required all his self-control to deal with it without betraying emotion. When he had to speak of a man like Allan Pollock, whose work they had to undo, he spoke of him coming to that fair portion of the county of Galway within a few miles of the town in which he was born and clearing 13,000 out of 15,000 acres of every human being upon them. He spoke of other scenes in Ireland where hundreds of families, some not owing even a penny of rent, had been turned out in all kinds of weather, at all times of the year, on Good Friday and on Christmas Day, so that even Sir Robert Peel had to pass a Bill preventing evictions on Good Friday and Christmas. Now he had another word to say to the missionaries of Empire. The battalions of Ulster rebels that made the revolution which robbed this country of its greatest possession had been followed by other battalions, until to-day they had 10,000,000 or 12,000,000 of people in the United States, of Irish birth or Irish blood, who, whenever friendship was proposed—a friendship that might rule the world—between England and the United States, declared "not until England does justice to Ireland." He was in America recently and had the honour of meeting many representative men, from President Roosevelt downwards. He paid a brief visit to Canada and made the acquaintance of Sir Wilfrid Laurier. He did not meet a single man of any race, religion, or political Party in the United States or Canada who did not say that of all the follies and crimes of which British statesmanship had been guilty the most glaring, and the most stupid, was the keeping open of this Irish question and refusing to Ireland what was given to other parts of the Empire. From the bottom of his heart he told gentlemen above the Gangway that in refusing to make Ireland satisfied and self-governed they were striking the worst blow at the strength and unity as well as the repute of the Empire. That was the way the feeling with regard to cattle-driving had arisen in Ireland. They had to undo the work of Allan Pollock. This was nearly done already. Of all the Scottish settlers that he brought to the country only one remained. It was rather courageous of the Member for Cambridge University to make the old imputation "they have made a solitude and called it peace." In Mayo, in Queen's County, in Meath and in Galway, the Unionists had made a solitude and called it peace, and their work had to be undone. Could they wonder that the Irish in America differed from them? Could they wonder that a man like Michael Davitt should have spent his life trying to break down the institution of Irish landlordism when they remembered that he was walking about at four years of age with bare feet and very little food in his stomach? These were the things that lay behind cattle-driving in Ireland. It was almost at an end now. The Chief Secretary had made an appeal to the good sense and generous feeling of the Irish people. They became their own peacemakers and had done what a thousand Coercion Acts could not do. Cattle-driving would never recur if this Parliament did its duty by the people of Ireland. The Chief Secretary was about to bring in legislation, not to create or initiate a new policy, but to carry out that of the Unionists, to fulfil their promises and to show that after all the word of a British Parliament and of a British Ministry would not be in the future as it had been so often in the past, almost violated. For that reason they looked to the future with great equanimity on that bleak February day, inspired by the speech of the Chief Secretary and by another notable speech; they felt in their veins something of the glow and the heat and the hope of a beautiful spring day. In the dark days of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries their people used to address Ireland in terms of symbolism as the little dark rose. They said the little dark rose would bloom again. They did not see it, but their descendants would. The little dark rose was about to bloom.

*Lord R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.) said he would make no attempt to imitate the somewhat exaggerated eloquence of the speech to which they had just listened. He would not as an Englishman perhaps have intervened in the debate had he not felt very deeply the importance of the issue not only to the Irish people but to the English also. An hon. Member who had spoken on the previous evening, had said he did not think an English Member had any right to intervene in a matter which really affected the purely domestic affairs of Ireland. He had heard the statement with something like astonishment. Even if the great ideal of hon. Members below the gangway were achieved and Ireland were a self-governing Colony, he did not know that hon. Members oppoiste would refrain from interfering in the internal affairs of that country. He did not see why it was right to criticise the state of affairs in Natal and wrong to criticise them in Ireland. Apart from all that, until Ireland was a self-governing Colony, it would be the duty and privilege of every Member of that House to give his vote according to what he considered to be the best interests of the Government of that country. If the debate had not caused very great interest on the other side of the House it was because the Members of this Parliament were not so alive to their public duty as they ought to be. The issue was one of very great importance. What was the state of affairs in Ireland? They must assume that the condition of Ireland a year ago was exceptionally crimeless and peaceful. What was the state of things now? The hon. Member for the Scotland division of Liverpool complained bitterly of exaggeration, and he gave a long list of injuries which had been done in the past by campaigns of calumny. He did not notice that the hon. Member mentioned any of the campaigns of calumny which had been carried on by the hon. Member himself and his colleagues, and yet not long ago a Chief Secretary standing at the Table of this House had to state that he was not only an Irish Secretary but also an English gentleman.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Yes, that was said by Sir George

Trevelyan twenty-five years ago, and he has since become a Home Ruler.

*Lord R. CECIL said the hon. Member for Donegal was quite right, for those were the words of Sir George Trevelyan. No doubt if Sir George had not become a Home Ruler he would have been assailed in the same manner at the present time. They all knew that the state of Ireland was very far from satisfactory, or at any rate this was the case in certain districts. It was, however, little satisfaction to know that the plague spots in Ireland were not over the whole country. It did not matter from the broad point of view whether it was one, two, three, or twelve counties that were affected. What they did know was that a part of the United Kingdom was not being governed in accordance with the principles of civilised government; that was a fact which was past dispute. They knew that a large number of serious outrages, including the shooting of persons, had occurred, and they also knew that there had been a very serious increase of that kind of crime which was so justly condemned by the Chief Secretary, viz., boycotting. He wished to reply to an observation of a personal character which had been made by the hon. Member for the Scotland division of Liverpool. The hon. Member said that boycotting could not be stopped by any application of the criminal law, and he quoted a passage from a speech made by the late Lord Salisbury. That speech had often been quoted and almost always misunderstood. And it was wholly misunderstood by the hon. Member below the gangway upon this occasion. The late Lord Salisbury in the speech referred to was speaking of a particular Crimes Act passed by Mr. Gladstone in 1881. That Crimes Act he said had failed very largely in its object, which was to restore order in Ireland, and defending his Government for not renewing it, he asked what was the use of renewing that particular Crimes Act, because it would not be effective for the suppression of crime. It was absurd to say Lord Salisbury thought that the passing of any Coercion Act was ineffective or inadvisable, because he was a party to the Act of 1887, which, on the contrary, was a complete success.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL said that the late Lord Salisbury made that speech in Newport in September, 1885, and it was not directed against any particular Act but against coercion in general. At that time Lord Salisbury was in league with the Parnellite Party.

Lord R. CECIL said the hon. Member was wholly inaccurate except as to the date of the speech. As for Lord Salisbury being in league with the Parnellite Party that statement was—he would not be permitted to call it untrue—a malicious perversion of the facts which had been constantly repudiated and had been as constantly restated.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL again rose.

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member for the Scotland division was listened to in silence and the least the hon. Member can do is to listen to the remarks of the noble Lord.

An IRISH MEMBER: Minorities must suffer.

*Lord R. CECIL said the question whether Lord Salisbury was right in 1885, or wrong was wholly immaterial to the discussion they were now engaged upon. But apart from boycotting they had cattle-driving, and he adhered entirely, not only to what the Attorney-General said in Ireland but to what he said yesterday in this House. He agreed that if cattle-driving was allowed to go on unchecked it might produce a state of affairs worse than that which existed at the present time in West Africa. The last item was the total failure of the machinery of justice in Ireland, and that could not be disputed. This was a matter of the utmost seriousness. No less than 287 prosecutions had been instituted by the Crown in which it must be assumed that according to the best legal advice to be obtained in Ireland there was a strong *prima facie* case. It must also be agreed that in case after case there was really no dispute as to the actual facts. And yet out of 287 cases brought forward only eight convictions ensued. That was undoubtedly a total breakdown of the machinery of the law. What did that mean? He did not think anyone could read the history of the last twenty-five years in Ireland without recognising what those symptoms meant, for they foreshadowed the initial stages of recurring lawlessness in Ireand. He agreed that up to the present they had not spread so far as to seize the whole vital energy of the nation and the country in a way the disease had done in times past, but nevertheless they knew if this kind of thing went on exactly what to expect. This kind of lawlessness had begun before in the same way. It began as a matter of sporadic and trifling importance, but it gradually spread and at last the country became a scene of anarchy and disorder. That was a matter for the House seriously to consider. They often failed to recognise what was really at the bottom of the lawlessness, and forgot what was meant by lawlessness. They were so accustomed in England to the supremacy of the law that he did not think they always recognised what were the difficulties and the unnaturalness of that state of things. It was by no means a normal state of things for a society to live together under such conditions that without any controversy whatever the law was enforced. That was not the normal state of things under which human beings lived together, nor was it a very old state of things. On the contrary, this doctrine of the absolute supremacy of the overwhelming force of the law was quite modern. It was a modern and very largely a British invention, and it was one of the great achievments of the Anglo-Saxon genius for Government. [NATIONALIST laughter.] If hon. Members below the gangway doubted that statement they could not have read history aright. Not only was that a great achievment, but it was a matter of the most enormous value to this country, because it was essential to freedom and to prosperity. He heard an hon. Member near him cheer the Chief Secretary when he stated that after all they all lived under police protection. That observation was perfectly true, and if they did not live under police protection they could not carry on any of the ordinary occupations of life. If the forces of the law were to cease for twenty-four hours in this city the whole prosperity of the city would be at an end. This has become so habitual that they treated it as a natural state of things. Even in this country the margin between order and disorder was by no means so large as people imagined, and it was not very long ago that through a mere blunder on the part of the executive officers of the law, the West of London was given up to something very like plunder arising from the riots in Trafalgar Square. Therefore the enforcement of the law was a custom and a habit, and it could only be preserved by the resolute use of the necessary forces of society. He had made that slight digression because of an observation which the Chief Secretary made in his speech, in which he said that it was not sufficient in dealing with a condition of disorder to deal merely with the symptoms, but that they must get down to the sources of the disorder, and he quoted an eloquent passage from Mr. Gladstone to that effect. What were the sources of disorder prevalent in Ireland to-day? The Chief Secretary attributed it to some disappointment amongst a necessarily limited class of the Irish peasantry. He utterly denied that that was the real cause of disorder in Ireland. Was it only in Ireland that there was a class of persons who desired property that belonged to another person? The Chief Secretary, therefore, had so mean an opinion of the Irish peasant as to think that he would be entirely induced to set aside the whole of the provisions on which modern society rested, because the land laws were not sufficiently enforced. He protested against that doctrine. They were accustomed to speeches from hon. Members who held Socialist opinions, who thought there were large classes of people in this country who were labouring under a far worse and more grievous sense of injustice than any of the people affected by the land question in Ireland. They said quite candidly that the present distribution of wealth was a great injustice and amounted to robbery of the poor by the rich. [AN HON. MEMBER: "Will you join them?"] They said so at every street corner. Did it follow from that that they should raid and rifle the houses in Park Lane? They bowed to the law, because they recognised that the convention and custom of obedience to the law was essential to the safety and prosperity, and even the freedom of the people of the country. What was really the curse of Ireland was not the Irish land system or anything of that kind. It was the habit of disorder. The hon. Member for the Scotland Division in an eloquent passage described the gross injustice and wickedness that was perpetrated in Ireland, and accounted for the violence of the opinions of the late Mr. Michael Davitt by what he had gone through as a child. He believed that to be a perfectly just and true account of what was the matter in Ireland. It was quite true that there had been grave disorders committed in the name of law. The fatal see-saw of defiance of peaceful government between one class and another had gone on until the habit of disorder had grown up. The Chief Secretary had spoken of the refusal of juries to convict, and, while admitting that that was a thing to be reprobated, he said that it had its value as showing the feeling of the country; it showed how removed the Irish people, or some portions of them, were at the present moment from that true conception of government on which alone modern society could rest. He would not stop to deal with the quotations which had been read from Lord John Russell. All he could say was that a more grotesque perversion of the facts of history than that presented by Lord John Russell he never had the misfortune to read. History showed that the greatest judicial crimes in England had been committed with the assistance of juries. The condition of Ireland seemed to him to be, he would not say exactly like, but not dissimilar to that of a habitual drunkard. It was the habit of disorder in Ireland which was the essential vice this House must keep before it if it desired to deal effectively with the Irish question. Just as the habitual drunkard would always be able to attribute each particular outbreak to some accidental cause, so the Irish would ascribe their breaches of the law to some defect in the land laws. The real vice was that the desire to avoid this evil was not strong enough to enable them to resist even the slightest temptation. That could only be met in one way as in the case of the habitual drunkard, and that was by restraint and control. He at any rate was not ashamed to say that the first duty of the Government was to govern. If it found that the existing law was insufficient for the purpose of preservng order, it was bound to utilise all the powers at its disposal in order to effect that initial work. One quotation had been made from the late Lord Salisbury; he would give another. He believed thoroughly in the prescription of "twenty years resolute government." [Ironical NATIONALIST Cheers.] That observation was met at the time it was made in very much the same way as it had been met on this occasion. Events had proved that it was absolutely true. They had been told over and over again that when the late Government went out of office, Ireland was peaceful beyond what it had been for a number of years. They had been told to-day by the hon. Member for the Scotland Division that the process of reconciliation between England and Ireland was rapidly proceeding. But that came at the end of twenty years Administration, with a very small interval, of the Unionist Party and on Unionist principles. The first principle which had guided, and would always guide, Unionist Administration of Ireland was the maintenance of law and order by the ordinary law, but, if necessary, by an increase in the severity of the criminal law. They were told yesterday by an hon. Member that the people of England cared nothing for cattle-raiding. He did not know what constituencies the hon. Member referred to, but if he thought that the people of England as a whole cared nothing for cattle-raiding he was very much mistaken. He was quite convinced that the two great political principles which the people cared for were the principles of liberty and justice. He believed that they realised to the full that these principles could only be preserved by the enforcement and maintenance against all comers of the absolute supremacy of the law, and he believed from the bottom of his heart that, once the facts were plain to the English people, they would see that the supremacy of the law was enforced in Ireland with just the same determination and passion as they had shown on countless occasions before.

*THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. REDMOND BARRY, Tyrone, N.): The noble Lord who has just sat down has made what I consider a very unfortunate speech. He has left us in no doubt whatever as to what his view of the situation in Ireland is and as to the root cause of that situation. I hope I do not misinterpret the noble Lord when I say that he attributes the present state of Ireland to some disposition on the part of the people in favour of disorder. His specific for the purpose of meeting the difficulties now existing in that country is a repetition of twenty years of resolute government. The Party with which the noble Lord is associated was responsible for the administration in Ireland for a period of well-nigh twenty years. During that time that country was subjected to considerable periods of coercion, and yet the noble Lord, not satisfied with that, would repeat it all over again. If he had his way Ireland would again be subjected from this point to a course of twenty years resolute government. There is a world of difference between those views and the views entertained upon this side of the House. We have no such opinions as to the future of Ireland or as to the proper means by which that country is to be governed. The views of the Liberal Party upon that subject are perfectly well ascertained and we are here to-night to maintain and defend them against the Amendment moved by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Dublin. I have had some difficulty in presenting to my own mind a definite view of what the Amendment means. Up to the present the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman and hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition Benches have not been very definitely formulated, but looking at the Amendment itself I gather it has a twofold object. It is proposed, as I understand, to invite the House in the first place to pass censure upon the Chief Secretary for his administration in Ireland during the last nine or twelve months, and in the next place to make an appeal to the House, the result of which, if successful, would be to impose upon the Chief Secretary or anyone who succeeded him the necessity of applying more stringent measures in Ireland for the purpose of meeting difficulties existing there. Let us see how the case is made out on both branches of the Amendment. It is no doubt the case that there is existing in Ireland at the present time and has existed for some time back a condition of affairs which the Chief Secretary has admitted has caused him in the past considerable anxiety. But the right hon. Gentleman has stated truly that the state of things has changed materially for the better. While there is enough to cause the Government a certain amount of disquietude, still the state of affairs now there, and particularly during the last couple of months, gives the Government every reason for hoping that in a very short time peace in the full sense will be restored in that country. It is true as has been stated by certain hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, that there has been an increase in certain classes of crime and disorder in Ireland. But when I come to the question of the censure passed on my right hon. friend, what, I ask, is the remissness charged against the Executive? I am told that there has been a certain number of cases of boycotting and of firing into houses, and I ask what did hon. and right hon. Gentlemen charge in respect of that? Do they suggest that the Executive is in any degree responsible for them; that the Executive has failed in its duty, so far as it could, to bring the offenders to justice in the case of these offences? What is the point of the charge preferred against my right hon. friend in these two classes of crime? It is suggested, as I understand, by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, that if my right hon. friend had put the Crimes Act into force, these offences would not, in fact, have occurred. Is that so? I hope this House understands—it is necessary that it should—that the Crimes Act of 1887 has no relation, good, bad, or indifferent to offences of that sort. The Act of 1887 would not enable the Executive to prosecute under it in the case of these offences or in any way to deal with them. If the Crimes Act of 1887 was at the present time in full force, not a single crime that has arisen from the use of firearms would be cognisable under it, nor could it be prosecuted by any other than by process under the ordinary law. Reference has been made to the increase that has taken place in Ireland within the last twelve months of cases of minor boycotting. There is a difference between what the police understand as minor and serious boycotting, and during the last year in Ireland the cases of serious boycotting had fallen to nine—the lowest figure reached during the last fifteen years. In 1899 there were thirty-three cases of serious boycotting; in 1900, twenty-eight cases; in 1901, they grew to ninety-five; and in 1902, they fell to forty-one; while now, fortunately to relate, such cases do not exceed nine. I again ask as regards the action of my right hon. friend and of the Executive in Ireland, what is suggested by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite? What could they have done which was not done with any one of these nine cases? It seems to me that the case for the Amendment, so far as there is a case at all to support it, depends upon the charges made against my right hon. friend for remissness on his part in dealing with the cattle-driving movement, which, unfortunately, arose in Ireland during the last twelve months. That movement the House will understand was one which caused my right hon. friend and those connected with him in the Government of Ireland very great anxiety and care. It arose from a situation in Ireland of which the House will take cognisance. It began, as I remember, about the month of April or May last year. It took place amongst the people, at a time when they were suffering, as the House will appreciate, from a certain amount of irritation arising from disappointment of political hopes and from the fact that the congestion in the West of Ireland remained unrelieved. It is within the knowledge of both Parties that the Act of 1903 was intended to deal with and remove that congestion. We all know that that Act has failed to achieve that purpose. The hopes that existed had been grievously disappointed and, therefore, the movement arose under conditions very likely to cause great concern to those responsible for law and order in Ireland. It was plain that the situation involved a large mass of the people, especially in the counties of Roscommon and Galway. Now what was the assistance which the Government had for the purpose of dealing with the movement? Under ordinary circumstances the Government of Ireland would be entitled to look to those who professed that they were law-abiding, for their support in dealing with the movement. How were they assisted by such persons when this movement was showing its head in Ireland? Day after day, both in the newspaper Press and on the platform, hon. and right hon. Gentlemen and their friends were insisting throughout the country that my right hon. friend the Chief Secretary and those connected with him, were in secret league and sympathy with that movement. The language of my right hon. friend and other members of the Government was used I fear for the purpose, and in the hope of instilling into the minds of the people of Ireland the impression that the movement was one wholly favoured by the Government and that any attempt to suppress it was being made merely in deference to the public opinion of this country. I need hardly tell the House that the immediate effect of all that was to encourage the law breakers and to add to their numbers. And this I know, and I say it with a full sense of responsibility for what I am stating, because I was engaged in many of the prosecutions—that that language proved a great embarrassment to us in asserting the law both in the Magistrates' Courts and in the trials before juries—The situation was one of great stress and difficulty, and very little would have made it a very serious movement for the Executive to deal with. The danger was that a single false step would have aggravated it into a movement no longer local but national in its proportions. Now, what was the Executive to do? Hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite suggest that it was their immediate duty to put the Crimes Act into operation. [OPPOSITION cries of "No."] I understood so from the observations of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite.

AN HON. MEMBER (on the OPPOSITION Benches): No; not until after the ordinary law had been tried and exhausted.

*MR. REDMOND BARRY: But the Executive did their best to deal with the movement under the ordinary law. I make bold to say that there was not a single resource of the ordinary law which was not used for the purpose of dealing with it—not one.

AN HON. MEMBER (on the OPPOSITION Benches): And failed.

*MR. REDMOND BARRY: I will come to that in a moment. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Dublin yesterday spoke of the act of the Government in proclaiming five or six counties and putting in force a Statute of William IV. I must tell the House what that was for. Under that Statute it is competent for the Government of Ireland in case of disturbances in a county to proclaim that county as in a state of disorder, and to send an additional police force. The Government took that step at once, and a large number of additional police were sent to the disturbed counties. Not only was that course calculated to arrest the disorder, but those counties had to pay, as a sort of punishment, half the cost of the additional police. What next? There was not a single case of cattle-driving that came under the notice of the Executive from that time to the present, where any evidence was forthcoming, in which a prosecution was not instituted. In all during that time 572 persons were dealt with under the ordinary criminal law. A great number of those were brought before the magistrates in sessions. The number of persons who were ordered by the magistrates to find bail was 228. It is right that I should say at once that that procedure, which was somewhat decried by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, has been so far successful that with the exception of one single case, not one of these persons who were bound over to keep the peace afterwards engaged in the crime of cattle-driving. In every single case the order of the magistrates was perfectly effective for its purpose. No doubt before other magistrates there was failure to obtain convictions. As many as thirty two persons were discharged, while in the case of seventy-six accused informations were refused by the magistrates for reasons which seemed good to them—I suppose because of the failure of evidence. Now what was going on concurrently with that? One hundred and twenty-six persons were returned for trial before juries by magistrates in connection with cattle-driving offences. These 126 persons were not tried separately. The number of cases in which these persons were involved did not exceed thirteen in all; that is to say there were thirteen cases of indictment, involving 126 persons. What was the course taken by the Government with regard to them? I think hon. Members opposite will admit that the Government were perfectly justified in taking the course they did, in giving a fair chance to the ordinary law. These cases were returned for trial, some of them to the Summer Assizes of last year. One of them, and one only, was tried at Birr, the prosecution being conducted by my right hon. friend the Attorney-General.

The prosecution resulted in a disagreement of the jury. There were eight cases for trial in the counties of Roscommon and Galway, and, my right hon. friend seeing, as the result of the disagreement of the jury at Birr, that it would not any longer be safe or desirable that the trial of these offences should take place in a local venue, an application was made to have the venue or place of trial transferred from Galway and Roscommon to the City of Dublin. Do hon. and right hon. Gentlemen suggest that there was any remissness up to that point on the part of those charged with the administration of the criminal law in Ireland? As far as I understand, it was a proceeding which was approved of on all sides. [Sir E. CARSON "Not on ours."] It was approved of because at that time the condition of Galway and Roscommon was such as to render it doubtful that there could be a fair trial in either of these counties. The application was made at the Summer Assizes of 1907. These cases were the only outstanding ones at the time in which men had been returned for trial. In the other cases the men had been already taken before magistrates and dealt with, in the way I have described to the House. The cases transferred to Dublin were brought to trial there in the week beginning the 20th of November last year. I have been asked by the hon. Gentleman "has the ordinary law broken down or not?" and I would ask the House to consider the state of things in Dublin when these cases came on for trial. The hon. Member for North Fermanagh last night, as I understood, suggested that the failure of juries in Ireland to convict in these cases was due either to intimidation offered against witnessess, so that the evidence was insufficient, or else to intimidation from which the jurors suffered. I understand that an hon. Gentleman opposite assents to that. Now what was the situation in Dublin in November of last year, when these cases came for trial? Do hon. Gentlemen opposite from Ireland, or any hon. Gentleman, in any quarter of the House, who knows Ireland, suggest that a state of intimidation prevailed in the City of Dublin, such as would render it impossible to obtain a fair trial before a jury in that city? I have here a report of the charge delivered by the Recorder of Dublin on the 18th of November, 1907, at the City Criminal Sessions, and let me say that Mr. O'Shaughnessy is well known to many Members of this House and is one whom we all know in Ireland, as filling his high office with great distinction to himself and great advantage to the City of Dublin. He is a gentleman unrivalled in his knowledge of Dublin and its people. In addressing the Grand Jury he described the normal peaceful condition of the City of Dublin and during the three or four years that he has been Recorder he has on many occasions made several observations of the same character. That, then, was the venue at which these trials were to take place—a venue in which it is impossible for anyone who has any acquaintance with the affairs of Ireland to suggest that intimidation was rife, or that any circumstance existed which would prevent the trial of any criminal being conducted under perfectly fair and impartial conditions. As we know, in the first case tried, there was a conviction. Seven more trials occurred; in one of them there was an acquittal and in the rest there was a disagreement of the jury. One asks oneself the question, "What was the meaning of it all, and to what was the result due? Was it caused by intimidation? I say emphatically no. I was present with my right hon. friend throughout these trials, and it would be a perfect mockery of the truth to state that the jurors or witnesses were intimidated. I am bound also to say, that so far as I could see the cases were, I thought, clearly proved, and they were cases in which in my judgment the accused ought to have been convicted. To what then is the failure of the juries to be ascribed? An hon. Gentleman, who is well aware of what took place, referred to the pleas offered before the juries for the defence. I will tell you what they were. In the first place the counsel for the defence urged, and in many cases urged with a great deal of force, that these acts, which I think were plainly illegal and deplorable, were nevertheless unaccompanied by personal violence or by injury to animals, and, in my opinion, the jurors in Dublin, knowing the unhappy Western problem, were unwilling to declare as criminals men who had taken part in what they regarded as a demonstration intended only to force the Government into action for the purpose of relieving the distress. It may not be a satisfactory state of things, and I see it gives some pleasure to hon. Gentlemen opposite. I am, however, merely stating facts. The trials in Dublin occurred between the 20th of November and the last day of the month, and during the following week trials took place in three other important venues in Ireland. One was a trial at Wicklow, conducted by my right hon. friend, in which a Member of this House was prosecuted for actual participation in a cattle-drive. It was the case in which my right hon. friend made the speech which has been so much the subject of discussion in this House, and may I say one word in passing in regard to that. It is somewhat hard on him who made that speech to find it suggested that he has been all along in secret sympathy if not in actual league with those engaged in these practices. The prosecution failed in Wicklow. Wicklow, as all hon. Gentlemen from Ireland know, and none better than the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dublin University, is a venue wholly free from intimidation. It is a venue often appealed to in Ireland, and never have I heard it suggested that the jurors of any class, whether common or special, were likely to submit to any intimidation which would account for a failure to convict. The other two venues at which the remaining cases were disposed of were Cork City and the city of Limerick. The right hon. Gentleman is well acquainted with Cork City. [Sir E. CARSON "No, except by hearsay."] All the right hon. Gentleman heard I will venture to say was in favour of Cork jurors, and yet the Cork jurors, known as they are in Ireland for their fearless action in criminal cases, not only did not convict, but actually acquitted. Then last comes the city of Limerick, where the two remaining cases were tried, the prosecutions being conducted by my hon. friend the Member for North Fermanagh. Limerick stands also upon a high level in the estimation of those who have presided as Judges there. Mr. Justice Wright has complimented the juries there on the fearless and impartial way in which they had acted. The Member for North Fermanagh did not, last night, give the House the benefit of his views as to the conditions under which the jury came to disagree in these two cases at Limerick. I should be greatly surprised if he attributed the failure to intimidation. In the result then the situation was this, that while magistrates were prepared to deal with these cases in the manner I have mentioned, the jurors of Dublin, Cork, Limerick and Wicklow, all drawn from neighbourhoods in which it is ludicrous to suggest that intimidation prevails, point-blank refused to find men guilty for cattle-driving offences. What is the moral to be drawn from that? What do right hon. Gentlemen opposite suggest should have been done by the Government? Their view, as I understand it, is that the Government should have put the Crimes Act in motion on the spot. Mark the dates. It was not until the last week in November or the first in December of last year that these trials took place. The position at the moment has to be considered. Already public men had by letters to newspapers and otherwise proclaimed the folly and illegality of this practice of cattle-driving. Persons in the highest stations had publicly denounced it as being both illegal and immoral, and already it was plain to the Executive in Ireland that the practice was declining rapidly. In November I find the number of cattle-drives that had taken place was 108, in December they had fallen to eighty-one, and in January to thirty-four. So that in November and December, when we were confronted with what hon. Members will suggest was an absolute breakdown of the ordinary law, the situation on the other side was that public men of all sorts were declaring against the practice and the number of offences themselves was declining day after day. What was the Government to do in that state of affairs? Right hon. Gentlemen opposite will suggest that my right hon. friend should have forthwith proclaimed the Crimes Act. Will that commend itself to the House? Would my right hon. friend be heard in this House if he appealed for exceptional powers to enable him to deal with the situation that then existed in Ireland? The Executive wisely, as I think, took an absolutely contrary view. My right hon. friend took his stand upon this, that, as representing a Liberal Government in Ireland, he would apply himself with what speed he might to the root evil of this outbreak, and do what he could by legislation to remove it. Since then, day by day the movement had been declining, until we may congratulate ourselves that it has practically disappeared. I have been dealing with cases in which actual prosecutions took place. I should also mention that in January, so far from displaying any inactivity in the matter, two of the cases in which disagreements had taken place were again tried before special juries in Dublin and with the same result. I suppose no one will suggest that the special jurors of Dublin were the victims of intimidation. Another part of the indictment levelled against my right hon. friend is that certain individuals, one Member of Parliament in particular, were not proceeded against for speeches in connection with cattle-driving. This House will understand that the consideration of that matter was one of deep concern to the Chief Secretary. The problem of dealing with any man, whether a Member of this House or otherwise, for making speeches in connection with a matter involving a question of public or political interest is always one of difficulty. The question, I think it will be admitted, can never be confined to the mere question of whether or not a speaker deserves to be prosecuted for his particular utterances. The Executive must take a much wider view of the situation than that, and in determining whether or not a particular speaker is to be prosecuted the Executive are not merely entitled, but bound, to take into account the public opinion of the country, the effect which a prosecution would have in giving intensity and momentum to the movement in which the speaker was engaged, and the effect it might have in consolidating public opinion in its favour. My right hon. friend has been a good deal challenged for the discretion which he claimed for the Executive in directing or not directing prosecutions against particular individuals. He was right, I think, in claiming that discretion for the Executive. The decision taken by the Government was not, as has been rather unworthily imputed, an act of dispensation in favour of any particular man, whether a Member of Parliament or otherwise, but the decision was arrived at because it was believed to be consistent with the real interests of peace and law in the country. Now I have dealt with the action of the Government, and I should be disappointed if any Member of the House entertained the notion that there was any remissness on the part of the Executive in applying every resource of the ordinary law to combat this movement. What, then, is the present situation? What is it that hon. Members suggest should be done in future in Ireland? As I understand the second branch of the Amendment, the Executive are to be called upon forthwith to put the Crimes Act into operation in Ireland. Is that the object of hon. Gentlemen opposite? Is that what they wish for? I think we are entitled to an answer to that.

SIR E. CARSON: We say you ought to do anything that is necessary to enforce the law.

*MR. REDMOND BARRY: I think, with all respect, that is not an answer. I ask, in the situation in which we now stand, are we to put the Crimes Act into operation or are we to depend upon the ordinary law?

SIR E. CARSON: If the ordinary law is sufficient.

*MR. REDMOND BARRY: The truth is that when the present situation comes to be considered, when it comes to be understood that this cattle-driving movement is all but dead, it will be recognised that there is no situation in Ireland now which would justify any responsible politician in claiming that the Executive should put the Crimes Act into force. The House will rejoice that the movement has practically disappeared. The fact, however, is apparently to some hon. Gentleman opposite not so much a source of gratification as of suspicion and a matter to cause disquietude. In some quarters the cessation of cattle-driving is suggested to be actually the result of a discreditable bargain arrived at between my right hon. friend and certain persons in Ireland. We attribute it however to other causes—to the reassertion of the good sense of the Irish people—to their awakened confidence in the administration of my right hon. friend, and in the determination, they ascribe to him, that he will do his part to remove the real grievances which underlay that movement in Ireland. That is the true source of an event which I think ought to give satisfaction to Members in every part of the House. It is the reward, as we consider it, of the right hon. Gentleman's patient and courageous administration in Ireland. Hon. Gentlemen opposite scoff at that, but, in the situation in which he was placed, the patience, and temperance of my right hon. friend displayed more real courage than in making a precipitate appeal to other methods. Reward has come speedily to him for refusing to yield to clamour and obloquy, and the result is but part of the fruits yet to be expected from his administration in Ireland.

Mr. LAMBTON (Durham, S.E.) who was imperfectly heard, said the hon. Gentleman had contented himself by asking what the Opposition proposed to do, but he must know that it was the Government and not the Opposition who had to submit legislative proposals for Ireland. The hon. and learned Gentleman supposed that the Amendment meant censure on his right hon. friend, and had gone on to admit the case of the Opposition by saying that every resource of the ordinary law had already been put into force. He had remarked that the calling attention to these matters caused the Chief Secretary very great anxiety, but they caused very great anxiety to other people besides the right hon. Gentleman. No doubt they had every sympathy with him in his position; indeed, the right hon. Gentleman was always asking for sympathy, and they readily accorded it. What the Unionists maintained was that the condition of Ireland was causing enormous anxiety, not only to many people in Ireland, but also to many people in this country, and they asked that steps should be taken to remove the causes of that condition. Steps ought to have been taken long ago. The fault of the Government, in the opinion of the Judges in Ireland, was that the Executive had not lifted a finger to maintain the law. Surely that was a strong charge, and he did not think the right hon. Gentleman's speech had removed one single cause of anxiety as to that point. The hon. and learned Gentleman had continually asked them if they wanted the Government to put into force the Act of 1889. That was not the business of the Opposition. What they said was that if the ordinary law did not suffice, the right hon. Gentleman should come to Parliament and ask for means to maintain law and order in Ireland. That was the first duty of the Government. The hon. Member for Cork last night had spoken of the colossal ignorance of the English people of affairs in Ireland. He confessed that many people did not understand the Irish, and he was reminded of Burns' line—

> "Oh, wad some power the giftie gie us
> To see oursels as ithers see us."

He had noticed that hon. Members below the Gangway were sometimes annoyed when they considered that Englishmen were blind to some of the best qualities of the Irish people and some of their best performances in Ireland. Englishmen, he confessed, could not always see that the Irish goose was a swan. They might be ignorant of the nature and feelings of the Irish people, but they were not ignorant of the fact that £100,000,000 had been granted by Parliament to Ireland.

Mr. BIRRELL: The landlords got some of it.

Mr. LAMBTON: The right hon. Gentleman says the landlords got it.

Mr. BIRRELL: Yes, a third of it.

Mr. LAMBTON said the money went to buy the land, and had been given to the Irish people, and it was because the land had not been divided quickly enough that a feeling of impatience had arisen to which a great deal of this crime was due. The right hon. Gentleman said he had made his first long speech in the House on the Act of 1887, but he himself could go back to 1882, when he made the only speech in his life which had had any effect. He made it on the Crimes Act of the Liberal Government.

Mr. BIRRELL: My speech was on the Home Rule Bill.

Mr. LAMBTON said that when he heard denunciations of the Act of 1887 he was rather inclined to go back to some of the things said on the previous occasion. The right hon. Gentleman in his speech had given a lot of statistics which were more suitable to stockbrokers than to Parliament. The right hon. Gentleman said, "What is the price?" That was at the bottom of the whole question. What price had the right hon. Gentleman given for the temporary cessation of cattle-driving?

Mr. BIRRELL: None.

Mr. LAMBTON said he was glad to hear it. What price did the Irish people expect from the Government? What price did hon. Members below the gangway expect? They might have brought about the cessation of cattle-driving much earlier, and they had brought it about now, in their own words, "to give the Irish Secretary a chance." The right hon. Gentleman had screwed his courage up to say that his fingers itched to arrest some of the people in Ireland, but he had done nothing. They had been told by the Foreign Secretary, and other Members of the Government, among them the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the Chief Secretary had the support of the Cabinet. He presumed that meant the majority of the Cabinet.

Mr. BIRRELL: No; the whole Cabinet.

Mr. LAMBTON believed there were a score of members of the Cabinet, and that the whole twenty of them were itching to arrest malefactors but were afraid to do so. He would like to have seen that Cabinet meeting. Some of the members must have been rather restless. He heard the speech of the Secretary for India and also that of the Chief Secretary, and he could not understand how they could be members of the same Cabinet. The Irish Secretary said he governed Ireland on Liberal principles, but the Secretary for India, in reference to that country, said he would not remain at the India Office or in any other responsible department if he had first to catalogue his principles and arrange his duties on those principles. But the Chief Secretary for Ireland openly boasted that he was going to carry out the Government of Ireland on Liberal principles. All he could say was that he would rather have the Secretary for India's view than that of the Secretary for Ireland. Because the Government made certain speeches in 1887 nothing would induce them now to touch the Coercion Act; but he would remind hon. Gentlemen opposite that there was another Coercion Act which they might have used — namely, that of 1882, which was passed by a Liberal Government, and which contained strong provisions making protection from crime more positive than it was. The Chief Secretary and the Solicitor-General had told the House that in the case of these cattle-drivers the Government could not get juries to convict. The Solicitor-General had told them that the chief instigator of the cattle-drives, who was in gaol now, was not prosecuted by the Government because the Irish people were not in entire sympathy with the law. It was unfortunate that the Government had created the impression that as the Irish people were not in sympathy with the law, therefore the law was not to be enforced. Now it appeared the Irish people were satisfied that they were going to get from the Government all they wanted, for lawlessness had ceased. He could not veil his eyes from the iniquity and weakness of the Government, and he feared the effect that would be produced upon future good government in all parts of his Majesty's dominion.

Mr. J. DEVLIN (Belfast W.) said the hon. member who had just sat down was one of the Tory free trade how it was Tory free traders had made Members of the House, and having heard the hon. Member's speech on this occasion he now understood so little progress in England. Recently there had been an effort made in England to subordinate tariff reform and other questions to racial prejudice. They hoped to save themselves by raising an Irish scene, and by pursuing a propaganda of calumny. The right hon. Member for South Dublin, who opened the debate, referred to a question of his (Mr. Devlin) which was on the Paper, and said that the reason for that question was that the hon. Member for West Belfast was afraid to have the returns therein referred to published, as they would indicate the criminality of Ireland. Nothing of the kind. He simply objected to a principle which did not exist in English Courts being perpetuated in Ireland, especially as these returns had been used by Irish Judges for the purpose of delivering harangues from the bench and for the purpose of intimidating jurors. They had the case of the Lord Chief Justice of Ireland, who actually from the bench rebuked the Attorney-General for not prosecuting an Irish Member, although he (the Lord Chief Justice) might be the very Judge who would have to try the case. And in another case in Ireland an Irish Judge—a man of great legal eminence and impartiality outside of politics,—actually walked on to the bench and proceeded to reply to a political speech delivered by the hon. Member for Waterford. This was in a Court of justice specially selected as the particular arena where persons charged with cattle-driving should be tried. When they heard Judges quoted in that House let it be remembered that Irish Judges were partisans. It was stated that there had been conspiricy, intimidation and boycotting in connection with Ireland. So there had been. But the conspiracy was in England and in the north of Ireland. The conspiracy was a conspiracy between the English Unionst newspapers and the Ulster Unionist Members and the official classes in Ireland. He read the other day in the *Daily Telegraph* a statement in which it was stated that the United Irish League was responsible for keeping the village ruffians quiet, and that the moment the inspiration was given from headquarters murder would once more be rampant.

That was a scandalous and infamous allegation. The United Irish League, like its predecessors the Land League and the National League, had been a mighty instrument to teach the people how great agrarian revolutions could be carried on, and how great reforms could be achieved without applying those dangerous criminal methods. The late Mr. Parnell and Mr. Davitt had taught the Irish people the true power of constitutional agitation, and when a paper like the *Daily Telegraph* published a scandalous statement of that character it gave one the feeling that the slandering of Ireland, the impeachment of the Irish nation, and the exaggeration of every little incident in the country against the just claims of the people for self-government, only showed how essential Irish unity was and how powerful a movement like the Irish National League ought to be made to meet the forces which had conspired to slander a people and ruin a whole nation. There had been intimidation not only in Ireland, but in this House. There had been one remarkable omission from this debate, one picturesque figure absent, and that was the hon. Member for North Armagh. He had not told them anything about intimidation. Could there be anything more intimidatory than the letters which the hon. Member for North Armagh wrote to Mr. Bailey. The Ulster Members talked about Nationalists intimidating a man who owned 6,000 acres of untenanted land in the congested districts of Ireland. Was that any worse than the action of a Member of the Ulster Unionist Party who endeavoured in this House, to intimidate a public official appointed by the Government of his own party, and who, in the discharge of his administrative duty was threatened by the hon. Members that unless he became the plaything of the Ulster Members of Parliament, when the Unionist came back they would dismiss him because he had refused to be the creature of the Landlord Party in Ireland? He noticed that during the Mid Devon election, the reverend Mr. Rogerson, preaching in Mid Devon, said that those who belonged to the political majority of Mid Devon would have every excuse, if they came to think it preferable, to deal with tradesmen out of the town, rather than with those who, not only in a recent election, but constantly in previous elections, had refused that freedom to their political opponents which they claimed for themselves. That was not the statement of a Catholic priest in Ireland who saw the woes and sorrows of his country, and the squalid condition of the Irish people, but a political English partisan clergyman, who threatened the Liberal traders of Devonshire as to what would happen to their trade, because they had dared to exercise their rights and functions as citizens, and had given their votes for Liberal and Progressive Members. And notwithstanding this, hon. Member above the gangway came to the House of Commons with their sneers, and lectured the Irish people for intimidation in regard to an agitation which simply desired to rivet public attention upon a great economic wrong, and which endeavoured to secure the land of their country, upon terms which were extravagantly generous to the landlord. Every acre of land which had passed from the landlord to the tenant under the Act of 1903, had been transferred at a price, which, as the Chief Secretary had already stated, was calculated to excite the envy of the greatest landlord in England. This great movement in Ireland was not one to steal the property of others, but a legitimate and constitutional agitation. Personally he had never justified cattle-driving in Ireland, and he had never spoken at a meeting where cattle-driving was advocated, but nevertheless he came to the House of Commons prepared to defend it. His reading of the political history of the last thirty years had been that so long as they came to the British Parliament and appealed to their reason, they were only met by the scoffs of gentleman of the type of the hon. Member above the gangway; but when they came with an organised people and a united Ireland, when the Irish people knew their wants and were able to exercise their power, then they came with the real logic of an irresistible claim. It was that House which had taught them that it was only by cattle-driving and methods of that kind that they could obtain any beneficial measure from the British Parliament. It was only in that way that they had been able to extort from generous statesmanship the recognition of their claim for the remission of the wrongs under which Ireland had suffered.

LORD R. CECIL: Hear, hear.

MR. J. DEVLIN: Yes, the noble Lord knew that was so, and no one better, because it was hereditary with him. The noble Lord was the son of "twenty years of resolute Government." He knew that twenty years ago two policies were placed before the English people in regard to Ireland, one of them the policy of Mr. Gladstone—a policy of pacification, conciliation, justice, and liberty—and the other twenty years of resolute Government. To-day Ireland was no nearer to the British Empire, although it might have been if Mr. Gladstone's policy had triumphed. Lord Salisbury received his verdict from this country, and he got his twenty years of resolute Government, and where did they stand to-day? The noble Lord had said himself that there was more lawlessness in Ireland now, and more discontent than there was before. If that were so, where did this policy of twenty years of resolute Government come in?

LORD R. CECIL: The result was destroyed by the present Chief Secretary.

MR. J. DEVLIN said it was not destroyed by the Chief Secretary, but by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover. The last Unionist Government introduced the Land Act, but the Ulster Members and their supporters put every obstacle in the way of its becoming the solution of the problem which the statesmen on both sides of the House desired it should be, in the interests of both the tenant and the landlord class. The Ulster Members cared for nothing but the misrepresentation of their own country, and they seemed to be proud of anything they could use for the purpose of blackening the fair name of Ireland, and holding up to the scorn of the world the country which they ought to be as proud of as the Nationalists were. The Ulster Tory Party, which claimed to speak for the North of Ireland, had made Unionism in Ulster stink in the nostrils of every decent man. He could understand them demanding the rigorous application of the law if that policy was argued concurrently with the policy of social reform and economic advancement. But who ever heard a fruitful suggestion in favour of their own country? Let them take as an example the Order Paper of the House of Commons any day. What was it filled with? With questions put down for the purpose of showing that Ireland was a criminal country. He was an Ulster man himself, and represented one of the seats which had been won from the Ulster party, because Ulster democracy had revolted against them. Belfast was a Protestant and Unionist city, and he would be ashamed of himself if for the purpose of party capital—although he had come there and put questions on the Paper equally relevant, and from his own point of view far more politically effective—he resorted to the use of his position to slander his own people and to outrage every sense of decency in trying to hold up to scorn the people amongst whom he lived and to whom he belonged. They had heard a good deal about cattle-driving, but he had not heard the name of Sergeant Sheridan mentioned. Sergeant Sheridan did not drive cattle, but mutilated them, and he was allowed to go to America. Why was he not convicted? They had heard a great impeachment of the law officers of the Crown and the Chief Secretary for depending upon the ordinary law of the land, but Sheridan was guilty almost of every offence against law and justice, and he was responsible for sending innocent men to prison. And yet this cattle mutilator was allowed to leave this country, and this perjurer and uniform ruffian who was responsible for all these crimes in Ireland was now at large in America and his chief assistant was engaged in training young recruits for the Royal Irish Constabulary in Ireland.

There was another case of boycotting which he thought that whatever sense of fairness they possessed might have induced the men who made this attack to refer to. That was the case of Miss Sweeney and Mr. Cooke, J.P. Mr. Cooke was an Ulster Unionist, and a magistrate, who demanded the dismissal from a school of a teacher of sewing on the ground that she was a Catholic. There was no error as to the ground. Mr. Cooke had been quite open about it, and told them plainly what was the reason. To this demand the Presbyterian clergyman, who was the manager of the school, did not give way. The hon. Member did not know whether that rev. gentleman had at that time any cattle. He supposed he had not. At all events, there had not been any of his cattle driven or injured. He escaped with having the doors of his church destroyed. In that case they were face to face with an effort to secure justice. But that had not been the kind of decision which had been given in agrarian cases. And today Mr. Cooke was on the Bench dispensing justice to the part of the country which was benefited by his presence, one of the most devoted maintainers of the Union, one of the chief props of Empire in that part of the north of Ireland. He had heard with interest the maiden speech last night of the hon. Member for Bury St. Edmunds. The hon. Member had manifested both vigour and ability; and his speech had been a great relief by contrast with the dull and dreary speeches of the Ulster Tory Members. He had said that all the misery had been brought upon Ireland by the agitators. But the misery was not brought on in Ireland by brains, but by breweries. He would suggest that the hon. Member, when he had the opportunity, should visit the West of Ireland, in which even for selfish reasons he might feel an interest, seeing that there was the chance of their being able to become better customers of his concern. Irish Members had been waiting to hear this threatened great impeachment of Ireland, and of the national movement in Ireland. They had listened to it. Was ever such tawdry eloquence—no argument, no facts, no basis for the changes so long maturing—so fruitlessly delivered? The Chief Secretary had faced his accusers with courage and had routed them. It would have been well if in the speech of the Solicitor-General there had been more human sympathy and less law. The Attorney-General, to be frank, had used an expression which had been so often quoted by the enemies of Ireland, for the use of which there was no ground of excuse. The Irish people were not savages, nor were they to be compared to the people of West Africa. He was sure that the right hon. and learned Gentleman must have used that expression thoughtlessly, otherwise he would not have committed himself to it. It showed how the administration of the law, prejudice and politics, were all mixed up in the Courts of law in Ireland. The speech made by the hon. Member for Jarrow the other day was both pathetic and tragic. The hon. Member drew a picture of the desperate competition that existed in the industrial centres, and pointed out that by English and Scottish legislation an endeavour was being made to solve the problem by keeping the people on the land. People were leaving the land in England for other than agrarian reasons, whereas in Ireland they wished to remain on the land. Surely the attempt which they were making to secure their homes and their land was one that ought to command the sympathy of hon. Members not only on the Liberal side, but on all sides of the House. Were the supporters of British government in Ireland satisfied that in sixty years the population of the country had been reduced from 8,500,000 to 4,500,000, those who remained being more impoverished than the larger number who formerly lived there? The Chief Secretary had struck the right note and grasped the key of the situation. Let the House distribute the grass lands on fair and equitable terms, make economic the uneconomic holdings, give some breath and sweetness and hope to the Irish peasant, and criminality, as Englishmen understood it, would disappear, because its root cause would have disappeared. Then they would have Ireland no longer a by-word and a shame to the Empire; it would be its glory, and the right. hon. Gentleman might have pride in having laid the foundations of a mighty superstructure of English content and Irish happiness.

*VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH (Maidstone) said he had listened with great pleasure to the speeches of hon. Gentlemen from Ireland below the Gangway. While he appreciated their vehement rhetoric, the fury of their denunciations always caused him to question their sincerity. He verily believed that if ever the Home Rule policy were carried to its fullest extent the Irish Party would be a hopeless and forlorn Party, because their one object of agitation would be entirely gone. He had listened with very great interest to the speech of the Chief Secretary. He had come down to the House with, to a certain extent, an open mind, and had been greatly astonished at the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. He assured the right hon. Gentleman that if the question of land settlement was ever to be brought to a successful issue it must be based on law and order. The security of the land stock also could only prevail with security of law and order in the country. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had condemned the Opposition for the difficulties they had placed in the way of settlement of the land question in Ireland. Therein he disagreed with the right hon. Gentleman, who ought to put the responsibility upon those who sat below the gangway, and who had been the instigators of all that had taken place in Ireland during the recent past. Perhaps the most responsible of these was the hon. and learned Gentleman who sat for the City of Waterford, and who in no circumstances had deprecated cattle-driving. In fact, in a speech in Portumna in October last, the Leader of the Irish Party said with a reference to the Evicted Tenants Bill, that peace in that district would be a dishonour to the district and to Ireland. If the Leader of the Irish Party used such words they should not attach so much blame to the hon. and learned Gentleman's followers or to the poor dupes who followed their advice. The statement that the Opposition were making the question of the land settlement in Ireland more difficult was a mere travesty of the case. They had had a most interesting speech from the Solicitor-General for Ireland, the chief part of which, however, was taken up in asking the Opposition Questions. The hon. and learned Gentleman's first Question was, "Did they (the Opposition) consider that the Executive was remiss?" He did consider that the Executive was remiss if any law-abiding citizen in Ireland had to go in terror of his life or of being shot at. The Solicitor-General had asked what more could the Executive have done in the way of putting the ordinary powers of the law in force? Well, if those powers were not strong enough they could have put other powers into operation which they had at their disposal. The Solicitor-General asked if the failure of the juries to convict was to be ascribed to the Executive; but perhaps the situation had appealed to the sympathies of those juries and made them unwilling to convict the poor dupes, when hon. Gentlemen below the gangway were the instigators of the crime and outrage which had taken place; and yet they heard that the right hon. Gentleman was itching to prosecute, but had been unable to do so. They had heard a good deal about governing Ireland according to Irish ideas, but hitherto the country had seen the maximum of government according to Irish ideas and the minimum of government by His Majesty's Ministers. They had had vague hints that education would be the secret of the future settlement of the land question in Ireland. In that sentiment he agreed with the Chief Secretary, but in this vague and theoretical suggestion the right hon. Gentleman left out of account those individuals who were at present in their holdings cowering and intimidated because the Government would not put in force the powers at their disposal. The right hon. Gentleman talked about the shooting incidents, and said that the shots had been fired over the house; but, he asked, how would the right hon. Gentleman himself like it if a few bullets were fired through the roof of his house at Chelsea, even if he occupied the ground floor?

MR. BIRRELL: I should hope that the man would be arrested.

* VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH thought that the right hon. Gentleman would consider it a serious crime whether the shot was fired in a part of the house which was inhabited or not. They had

been told to compare the figures of crime in England and Ireland. There was no analogy whatever. Crime in England was not part of a conspiracy, but was committed from motives of personal gain to the individual; whereas in Ireland it was committed by the participants in a conspiracy fomented by other people against the law of the land. If there was an honest intention to govern Ireland in accordance with the principles of equity and justice, he asked the Chief Secretary if he proposed, in the event of a recrudescence of cattle-driving, to put in force powers more effective and more drastic than they saw in operation at the present moment? In fact, if the situation demanded it, would the Government put in force the Crimes Act again? He entirely agreed with the right hon. Gentleman in having a detestation of repressive measures, but the Government were at fault in not putting in force that drastic measure. He thought he could recall the reason for it. It was due to the fact that when in Opposition they had, from purely Party motives, not supported the previous Government in passing and using the Crimes Act, and now, when in power, they were unwilling to admit that that was done from purely Party, and really unworthy, motives. No suggestion had ever been put forward by hon. Gentlemen opposite towards the solution of this difficult and almost insoluble problem. He should have hoped that something in the nature of statesmanship would have been displayed by the Government. What an opportunity there was for the settlement of this Irish question by a Minister who had already twice failed! He believed that the task was not a difficult one if the Government only made up their mind to repress sternly all illegalities and provided protection to every individual who had a right to demand it. He wondered if the events which were occurring in Ireland would be tolerated in any other civilised portion of the world for a moment. The worst feature of cattle-driving in Ireland was that it was received with approbation by hon. Gentlemen who sat below the gangway. They also heard from those who were in sympathy with the movement that cattle-driving was not a criminal offence. He would not argue that point, but he did not think that anyone would deny that it was in itself cruel in its action, and that the animals who were subjected to that treatment were injured thereby. [NATIONALIST cries of "No."] He maintained that it was so, and also that it was most reprehensible in its results. It was bound to be injurious to the whole *morale* of the people of the country, and to the administration of the law in Ireland. He submitted that if the Government failed to put down any recrudescence of this agitation they would be guilty of something akin to criminal negligence. But they were told that there was to be no more cattle-driving. Whether that was so or not he did not propose to say; but what were the reasons for this lull in cattle-driving? The reason put forward the previous night by the hon. Member for Cork was that—

> "For the first time the present Chief Secretary had taught the Irish people that there might be such a thing as their own law and order, which it was their own interest to enforce. He had succeeded in making the Irish people their own peacemakers to an extent which deserved a vote of thanks rather than a vote of censure."

He was very sorry that the right hon. Gentleman seemed to be very glad to receive that pat on the back from the hon. Member for Cork; but the Lord Chancellor used very different language and expressed the idea that it was owing to the proceedings taken under the Statute of Edward III. that the people were brought up and sent to prison. It was curious to note that this employment of the Statute of Edward III. was said by the hon. Member for East Mayo to be worthy of the worst days of coercion; so that the hon. Member for East Mayo had proved up to the hilt that cattle-driving had come to an end by coercion. He maintained that there was only an armistice in cattle-driving for the time being. The reason for that was not much in doubt. He believed that Irish Members were giving the Government a chance to fulfil some of the promises they had made, to fulfil that part of the bargain which had been so strongly repudiated by the Chief Secretary.

MR. BIRRELL was understood to deny the suggestion.

*VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH said that the interpretation of various things which the right hon. Gentleman had said was that if the Irish Members behaved in a certain way and gave him their support, he would support them. That was, he believed, the reason why the Irish Members were giving him a chance—a proud position for a Minister of the Crown to stand in. He asked whether it was a coincidence that unrest and disturbance in Ireland ran concurrently with a Liberal Administration. How was it that for the last twenty years there had been to a large extent peace and tranquility in Ireland? The reason was that the Unionist Administration when it came into power, where he hoped they would be again at an early date, grappled with the problem in the initial stages of their administration and by doing so suppressed that germ of unrest which was now rampant in the country, and they left the country in a peaceful condition, a fact which had been testified to on all sides and by no less an authority than Mr. Bryce who was the Chief Secretary at the commencement of that Administration. The reason of the unrest and disturbance was that there was in power an unscrupulous party who had sown the seed of unrest and they now had to reap the harvest of insurrection. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman to have done with those philosophical arguments and theoretical views which he put forward and not to wink at crime and almost to connive at it. He would urge upon him to put forward the strong arm of the law for the purpose of giving protection to every person in Ireland instead of allowing all the civilised world to point the finger of scorn at this country because its administration was dictated by a set of turbulent Irishmen. He believed that the idea was held in some quarters that there was something in this matter of Home Rule and that if it were given to Ireland the question would be settled once and for all. He would recommend those who held those views to study very carefully the history of Ireland from 1886 up to the present time, and he thought they would see that, so long as no vague promises were held out, so long as lawlessness was suppressed, the Irish people were a law-abiding race, but that it was easy to inflame the passions of the people of Ireland by political devices, and he could only say that those devices should have been apparent, but that those devices were not so apparent was the reason of the present state of affairs in Ireland. He urged the right hon. Gentleman to take his courage in both hands and to use drastic measures when they were necessary, and to enforce the Crimes Act, which to his mind brought about the peace and tranquility which prevailed before a Liberal Administration came into power. With these few words he desired to support the Amendment which had been moved from the Front Opposition Bench.

MR. POWER (Waterford, E.) who was indistinctly heard in the Gallery was understood to say, that by the Land Purchase Act of 1903 the House had shown themselves willing to pay a large amount to secure peace and contentment in Ireland, and if they could have seen that poverty and despair would be banished they would have been prepared to give a larger bonus than they did to the landlords. It had turned out in the working of that Act that the portion of it favourable to the landlords had been largely used, but that the portion of it most favourable to the people, and which they had hoped would put them on the land, had been to a large extent a dead letter. He did not think that the people of this country had any idea of the grinding poverty which existed in some parts of Ireland. They had on several occasions relief works started and thousands of people were employed upon them and in no case did an able-bodied man get more than 6s. a week or 1s. a day for his ten hours' work. If that was not an awful proof of the poverty which existed he did not know what was. Hon. Gentlemen above the Gangway said that the real cure for any disorder that existed in Ireland was repressive measures and the re-enactment of the Crimes Act. In former periods when Coercion Acts were introduced they were brought in for a limited period and when crime was rife in Ireland, but that could not be said of the present Coercion Act which hon. Members were so anxious to revive in all its ferocity. It was introduced not to put down crime, and was aimed not at crime or criminals but at tenants' combinations and organisations which were absolutely necessary to preserve the very lives of the people. He remembered that Mr. Gladstone, when the Act was under discussion, said that if England was to coerce Ireland for crime, Ireland could say, that compared with England she had relatively less crime. The right hon. Gentleman said he thought the measure was more needed by England than Ireland, because for Ireland it was a question of suffering, and she knew how to suffer, whereas for England it was a question of shame and dishonour, and to cast away shame and dishonour was the first business of a great nation. Unfortunately those words were not heeded and the Act was passed. There was one phase in the passing of that Coercion Act which he thought was almost unique in Parliament. There was considerable opposition on the Liberal side to the passing of the Act, and to allay that opposition the Leader of the House, in his hearing and in that of his colleagues, promised distinctly that there should be an appeal from the decision of these removable magistrates in every case. That statement disarmed the Liberal opposition to a large extent, because they believed it would be a safeguard, but that was not the view of the Nationalist Members because they thought the appeals would go to Judges in whom they had very little confidence. The Leader of the House, however, never took any steps to fulfill his pledge, and there had been no appeal in any case provided for. His principal object in rising was to allude to the Glenhaheing case, because it happened to be in his constituency. There was an appeal pending, and he knew from the newspaper reports that reference had been made in another place to this question.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.) rose to a point of order and said the case to which the hon. Member was referring was undoubtedly *sub judice* at that moment, and if any hon. Gentleman on that Bench mentioned the case they would undoubtedly be at once called to order by the Nationalist Members. He ventured to ask whether it was possible to discuss the Matter in any way.

*Mr. SPEAKER said it was certainly undesirable to discuss any case which was likely to come before a Court of Law and if the case was still *sub judice* he should deprecate all discussion.

Mr. CULLINAN (Tipperary, S.) wished to bring to the Speaker's notice that when the hon. Member for East Tyrone rose to object to a reference being made by Members from the North of Ireland to the case of several prisoners and what occurred during the trial, he had ruled that it was permissible to refer to the matter.

*Mr. SPEAKER said he thought the hon. Member was mistaken. That was a wholly different matter. In that case the speech of the Attorney-General who was prosecuting was quoted in this House in order to show what in the opinion of the Attorney-General might result from certain crimes being continued. The observations did not in the least touch the case of the prisoners who were being tried, and might be tried again.

Mr. POWER said he would not enlarge on the matter, but he wished not so much to allude to the case of the alleged blowing up of Lord Ashtown's lodge as to call the attention of the Government to the state of things existing round about that estate which was dangerous to the peace of the country. Prosecutions had been going on for a long time, and to give some idea of the tension he would give one case. Some persons were being prosecuted for trespass and they watched the doings of a certain underkeeper of Lord Ashtown's. He was found to visit one of their farms; they went to his place and found pheasants there, and they found six shots in the pheasants which it was said were put there with a view of incriminating someone. That showed the tension which existed in that district and which might well lead to disturbance. It was only right to say that Lord Ashtown dismissed that underkeeper after that was proved in open Court, but still it was a strange thing for an underkeeper recently appointed to do. He desired to call attention to the state of feeling that existed and to ask the

Government whether they could do anything to allay it. He was sorry to say that when this gamekeeper was convicted and sentenced by a majority of the bench without hearing the prosecution fully, someone released the prisoner upon an *ex parte* statement. He also called attention to the fact that there was an evicted farm on Lord Ashtown's estate. The tenant who had been evicted was most anxious to get back, and although he had written and applied to be allowed to go back Lord Ashtown had taken no notice of the application, but had commenced planting trees upon the farm. He (Mr. Power) had written to the Estates Commissioners, who had approached Lord Ashtown and asked him to stop the planting, but no notice had been taken of their remonstrance. He hoped the Government would be able to do something to stop this planting until some settlement was arrived at. Feeling in the district was very strong and much excited over this and other matters, and at any moment the place might become a storm centre. If both sides got warm no one could tell what would be the result. Hon. Gentlemen above the Gangway seemed to think that coercion was the only remedy, but unfortunately coercion in Ireland was directed not against crime but against political opponents and organisations. The senior Member for Cork took an action against Lord Salisbury for a speech made at Watford. That action was tried at Manchester and certain witnesses were summoned from Ireland, among others Captain Slack. That gentleman said that for ten years previous to the foundation of the Land League the condition of Ireland was very satisfactory. He was then asked his opinion as to the condition of Ireland during the ten years that succeeded the foundation of the League and his reply was that it was most unsatisfactory. Captain Slack was compelled to admit that in the ten years preceding the foundation of the League twenty murders had been committed and that none had taken place in the ten years succeeding its foundation. But when asked to explain why he considered the period in which twenty murders were committed so much more satisfactory than the latter period Captain Slack showed the official view by saying that in the period when the murders took place there was no combination and no organisation in the neighbourhood. No crimes and no murders had taken place when there was an organisation, so that the House could see that the founding of this political organisation was necessary to keep the people in their homes. Of course he knew what the result of the division would be, but no one could say what this campaign of conspiracy would end in. It was an ignoble thing on the part of anybody to bring up the shortcomings of their country, if they were shortcomings, but the present campaign went fa beyond that; and he was glad to think that this ignoble proceeding on the part of hon. Members above the gangway would recoil on their own heads. When the people were called upon to give a decision upon the subject they would record a verdict which would stop a campaign of conspiracy which was a disgrace and discredit to the country.

*MR. CHARLES CRAIG said that with regard to the speech of the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down he had only to say one word. The hon. Gentleman had given his version of an incident that had occurred on the estate of Lord Ashtown at Glenaheiry and it was only fair that the House should hear the other side. Two gamekeepers in the course of their duty saw two men fishing not only in private waters but out of season. They went to these men and the head keeper showed his warrant and informed them that they would be searched. He proceeded to search them and found upon them an illegal engine used for fishing, called a stroke haul. He then summoned them, but the poachers also summoned him for assault and larceny. The case was tried by a local bench of magistrates, on which Nationalists predominated, who dismissed the summons for illegal fishing, and convicted the keepers of assault and sentenced them to a fortnight's imprisonment. As soon as these facts were reported to Dublin Castle an immediate order was sent down for their release. It was only fair that the hon. Gentleman having stated his view of the case the House should hear the other side. So much for the speech of the hon. Member. The speech delivered by the hon. Member for West Belfast was to an even greater degree than usual both vicious and vulgar.

*MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order, order. Those are not expressions that should be used in this House in regard to the speech of an hon. Member.

*MR. CHARLES CRAIG said he would, in deference to the ruling of Mr. Deputy Speaker, withdraw the expressions used. The hon. Member's speeches resembled each other very closely. He began by abusing the hon. Member for Durham, who immediately preceded him and whose speech in the opinion of those who had heard it was one of the best delivered during the debate. He then proceeded to deal with the hon. Members representing the Unionists in the North of Ireland, and having singled out the hon. Member for North Armagh who was not present and therefore unable to reply to his attacks, he proceeded to inform the House that every obstruction that it was possible to put in the way of the efficient working of the Land Act of 1903 had been placed in its way by the Unionist Members for Ulster. That was the one statement made by the hon. Member which he thought it worth his while to contradict. During the progress of the Land Purchase Bill through this House the representatives of Ulster did all in their power to assist it, and since it had become law they had done everything to make it a success. The greatest success the Act had achieved had been in Ulster. When the hon. Gentleman condescended to deal with the Amendment the only justification he could bring forward for the action of cattle-drivers and other law-breakers was that during the Devon election a Devonshire clergyman advised that certain persons should be boycotted for not voting in the way in which he desired they should vote. If the hon. Gentleman could only find that case in Mid Devon and the case of Mr. Coote in Tyrone—with the details of which he was not sufficiently acquainted to be able to reply to the hon. Member—to justify these cattle raids, boycottings and shootings, he could only say the hon. Member had made out a very poor case indeed. The hon. Member for the Scotland division of Liverpool had objected to the remarks made by Lord Lansdowne in another place, comparing in some respects Macedonia and Ireland. Lord Lansdowne had not meant to represent that Ireland was in the same state of lawlessness as Macedonia, but he (Mr. Craig) endorsed to the full the comparison which the noble Lord had made. It seemed to him that before His Majesty's Ministers sought to lecture the Sultan of Turkey on the maintenance of law and order in his own dominions, they ought to look to the state of Ireland, and in lecturing the Sultan it seemed to him they were approaching perilously near the region of hypocrisy. The King's Speech also contained a reference to the Congo State. It said that the Government were fully aware of the great anxiety felt with regard to the treatment of the people of the Congo, and its only desire was to see the government of that State humanely administered. There was an old proverb that those who lived in glass houses should not throw stones, and he thought that if ever there was a case in which it applied, it was with reference to the doings of the Government in Ireland. They found those words in the King's Speech with reference to the Congo, yet in Ireland boycotting, the deprivation of innocent men's means of living, shooting into houses, and outrages of all kinds were going on unchecked on all sides of them, and this in the very heart of His Majesty's dominions, within twelve hours of that House. It was pure hypocrisy on the part of His Majesty's Government. What right had His Majesty's Government to lecture a foreign nation on what might be going on in their territory when such a state of affairs existed in Ireland as had been described. It was said that the charges which they made against the Irish Office had not been precise. He hoped that accusations would not be made against him personally. The charges which he made against the Irish Government, and particularly against the Irish Secretary as the head of it, were, in the first instance, that during the whole year he had been in office the Chief Secretary had systematically misled the House as to the true state of affairs in Ireland; that he had tried to diminish and minimise as far as possible the state of lawlessness which existed, he did not say in the whole of Ireland, but in certain parts of it—seven or eight counties. The second, and one of the most serious charges against the Chief Secretary which he had to make, was that he had failed, on all occasions, to give to the person who had suffered damage or injury from these lawless acts that protection which was the right of every subject of His Majesty. In the next place, and this was also a very grave charge, the right hon. Gentleman from the time he had taken office, had given the most deliberate encouragement, to cattle-driving. The last charge against him was that he had allowed the United Irish League to usurp the functions of the Government which he was bound to keep in his own hands and guard most jealously. The Chief Secretary was entrusted by this House with very great powers; he had a great range of departments, and his responsibilities were as great and much more varied than those of any other member of the Government. The powers entrusted to him should not be used by anybody except the authorised subordinates of the Irish Office. The fact was however that the United Irish League was rapidly becoming, if it had not already become, an authorised subordinate department of the Irish Government.

When the Chief Secretary came into office the state of Ireland was not of course as bad as it was now, but he (Mr. Craig) did not admit that it was in so satisfactory a condition as had been represented. There was, as a matter of fact, a very considerable amount of cattle-driving, though it was of a different form. It consisted generally of pulling down walls surrounding grazing farms and driving the cattle into the road. When the Chief Secretary came into office a year ago he asserted that at that time Ireland was crimeless, and he made a now almost historical speech at Halifax in which he said that Ireland was in a more peaceful condition than it had been for 600 years. It was a mistake to suppose that cattle-driving only began last March. It began, as a matter of fact, in the time of the hon. Member for South Dublin. In the early stages of cattle-driving the people never imagined they would be allowed to carry on their nefarious business with absolute impunity; and, instead of doing it in the light of the day, these proceedings took place in the dead of night. They used to go to a man's land secretly in the night and pull down his wall or gate and drive his cattle; in the morning they had disappeared, and of course there were no signs of the perpetrators of the act. The hon. Member for South Dublin very soon put a stop to that. He simply said it was a lawless proceeding and must be stopped. He used the ordinary powers of the law, doing all he could to trace the offenders, and when he could he prosecuted them and brought them to justice; but, apart from that, he made a rule prohibiting any land from which cattle had been driven being sold through the Estates Commissioners. That had the desired effect, and when the right hon. Gentleman retired, cattle-driving for the time being had ceased altogether. Then Mr. Bryce came into office, and the first statesmanlike action he performed was to rescind that Estates Commissioners' Rule. From that moment, of course, cattle-driving began again and increased from day to day. In the early days as he had said it was carried on at night, secretly; but gradually people became bolder. They found very little notice was taken of cattle-drives by the Government, and they thought it was much less inconvenient to be there in the middle of the day. In a very short time after the present Chief Secretary came into office cattle-drives were carried out in broad daylight. Often they were advertised and frequently the operations were enlivened by the presence of many bands. In fact they were carried out with every publicity, as though the miscreants knew perfectly well the Government would take no serious action against them. It was true that publicity and advertisement of it were greater now than a year ago, but it was erroneous to suppose that when the right hon. Gentleman came into office there was no such thing as cattle-driving and that the country was, as he had said, in as peaceable a condition as it had been for 600 years. Their contention was that, if the Chief Secretary had been serious in his determination to put down cattle-driving, he could have done so with the greatest ease, especially in the earlier months of his office. He submitted to the House that it was a fundamental mistake to say that cattle-driving, as the Chief Secretary had said, was the outcome of disappointed hopes. It was nothing of the sort. It was precisely what the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone had said. It was a habit of disorder with the people, and it was produced by nothing more than by the knowledge of the people in the West of Ireland that, if they agitated and committed outrages for a few short months, they would get all they wanted from the Government. That had been proved from time immemorial. It had seldom mattered which party was sitting on the Treasury Bench. The Nationalists had learned long ago the lesson which Englishmen seemed far from learning, that if they wanted anything all they had to do was to agitate for it. That was the true explanation of the commencement of cattle-driving. Was it not absurd to tell the House of Commons, because the Land Act had during the last four years, not worked as expeditiously with regard to the division of grass lands in Connaught as was expected, there was any justification for cattle-driving? How could anyone solemnly make such a statement to a body of English gentlemen? To put that forward as an excuse for cattle-driving was one of the most extraordinary doctrines any Minister of the Crown could enunciate. Was it impossible for Englishmen to get into the way of looking upon Irishmen as ordinary human beings instead of something totally different from themselves? Irishmen were human, and had the same ideas of right and wrong and justice and injustice as themselves. Why, then, could they not treat them as ordinary rational beings, and apply the same principles to them as they would apply to themselves? Would any English Member countenance for a moment in his own constituency in England what was being done in Ireland? Would they think for an instant that the fact that the Act of 1903 had not worked to their entire satisfaction was any justification for cattle-driving? The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that when he saw all this going on his idea was not so much to punish the guilty as "to look behind the movement for the cause of the disturbances." That was directly contradictory of the English idea of government. He had charged the Chief Secretary before with having condoned these offences, and he would repeat that charge now. The Chief Secretary and every other member of the Government who had spoken of cattle-driving had not only tried to minimise it, but had gone out of their way to find excuses for those who committed these offences. In other speeches they had the well-known dictum of Lord Denman, who during the last few days had tried to wriggle out of what he had said, which was to the effect that in the opinion of the Government cattle-driving was not a serious offence. Lord Crewe had stated distinctly that it was contrary to law, but he always qualified this by dwelling on the wretched condition of those who took part in these drives, and generally sought to minimise or excuse the whole wretched business, And although every Minister of the Crown had been obliged to admit that this kind of thing was contrary to the law of the land, they had all done their best to minimise cattle-driving and present it to the country as a matter of no importance. The Unionists of Ireland pointed out long ago that language of the kind used by the Ministers of the Crown could only have one effect. What effect did they suppose their words would have upon the minds of those poor peasantry in the West of Ireland? The effect was that they saw that the Government were indifferent and would not take any serious steps to punish them for cattle-driving. If the Chief Secretary had been serious in his endeavour to put down this form of lawlessness it was at any moment in his power to do so, not necessarily by having recourse to the Crimes Act but by re-enforcing that very proper rule which the Member for South Dublin put in force when he was Chief Secretary, which instructed the Estates Commissioners that no person who had been identified with or convicted of taking part in any cattle-driving should be allowed to take part in the division of that land. He did not think there would be any hardship in such a rule as that. Last session he asked the Chief Secretary several times if he considered the state of affairs in regard to cattle-driving had reached such a pitch as to justify the adoption of a rule of the kind he had alluded to, and on each occasion he refused, and he had never yet given any explanation why he had not adopted such a rule. But there was the other remedy which might have been employed. He did not say that the time had arrived for its adoption in March or April last year, but the time had long since arrived when it was not only justifiable but it was the bounden duty of the Government to put the Crimes Act into force in order to put down cattle-driving. Here he would like to quote the Prime Minister in support of his contention that when the law breaks down it is the duty of the Executive to put into force whatever powers they possessed for the purpose of maintaining order. These were his words—

> "In many parts of Ireland for offences of an agrarian character they could not trust to the ordinary class of jurymen doing their duty, partly from prejudice, but mainly owing to the cruel and overpowering system of terror of the National League. He could not be sure with the clearest evidence, of being able to get a verdict. In order to maintain the arm of justice in Ireland it was not only reasonable but necessary, to provide some measure which would overcome that difficulty, and it might very well have been made part of the permanent law."

In reference to trial by jury, the Attorney-General for Ireland was asked when he was going to put the Crimes Act into force, andhed replie that the Liberal Party would never put it into force. It had been said that sterner measures were not adopted because juries could be trusted to preserve law and order and do their duty; and if the jurors of Ireland had known they were going to be backed up by the Government they would have done their duty. Had jurors been led to believe that the Government were serious in their determination to put down cattle-driving, the hundreds of judicial farces which took place in the county courts and at the assizes last year would never have happened. Did the Attorney-General think that the Irish juryman was more slow-witted than those who took part in cattle-drives? He had talked about the judicial farce at the winter and summer assizes. The learned Solicitor-General, in a speech he had made earlier in the day, had tried to show that they had done everything in their power to bring these people to justice. He would admit that so far as mere legal forms were concerned they had done. Juries felt that at any rate, whatever the reason of it was, the Government did not want convictions. Whatever the cause was, the fact remained that out of these 237 persons tried at these two assizes there were only eight convictions. If anything in this wide world could give a more extraordinary exhibition of a judicial farce than that he would be very pleased to hear it. The jury disagreed in 158 cases; fifty-six were actually acquitted, and the proceedings were abandoned in fifteen cases. The Government with such a statement as that before them and so long as cattle-driving existed—and when that happened it was increasing—with those figures before them there was one duty and one duty only cast upon the Government, and that was to say, "This must cease"; and no matter what they personally thought of the Crimes Act and of putting measures of that sort in force, they were bound to maintain law and order, and whether they liked it or not put that Act into force. But they knew that did not happen. There had been several theories mentioned as the reason why cattle-driving had stopped—he did not say himself that it had stopped—but at any rate so far as one could judge there was a partial lull in the matter of cattle-driving. One theory was that the Chief Secretary had made a bargain with Cardinal Logue on the subject of the University Bill.

AN HON. MEMBER: That is denied by the Chief Secretary.

*MR. CRAIG said that another theory was that a definite and deliberate bargain of some sort had been entered into with the Leaders of the Nationalist Party that, if cattle-driving was stopped, measures embodying the fullest provisions with reference to dividing up the grass lands in the West of Ireland would be produced at the eariest moment. He did not think that actually any agreement of the sort was entered into, but he thought the explanation of the whole thing was perfectly simple. The Chief Secretary and the Under-Secretary, Sir Antony MacDonnell, and other members of the Irish Executive had had this question of the dividing up of the grass lands in Connaught under their consideration for a great many months, probably before the beginning of last year, and when they saw these very lands which they proposed to divide up amongst the peasants of Connaught had been cleared of stock and thrown into the hands of the Estates Commissioners without the necessity of any Act of Parliament or anything else, they were not displeased. He could imagine a conversation between Sir Antony MacDonnell and the Chief Secretary, "Why should we interfere with this operation of cattle-driving when all these lands which we are so anxious to acquire for the purpose of dividing up amongst these people are actually being cleared and thrown into our hands without any action on our part?" He thought that was the explanation of the supineness of the Chief Secretary. He wanted these lands just as much as the poor peasants did who were raiding cattle from them, and he had been very loth all along to take any action to prevent what, he had no doubt, he considered a most excellent operation, which in every way would facilitate and help him in the passage of the Bill which, he understood, he was shortly going to bring into the House of Commons for the compulsory acquisition and division of these lands. It seemed to him that no further explanation was necessary. That was at any rate the explanation which he gave, and which he firmly held was the motive which actuated the Chief Secretary in the absolute want of energy he had shown from the very beginning to put down this lawless cattle-driving. Supposing the theory he put forward was correct, he left it to hon. Members opposite to impute the measure of praise or blame to the Chief Secretary for his action in that matter. Personally, he thought his action in the matter had been most reprehensible. For any Minister of the Crown to tolerate lawlessness, to condone and encourage it, as he maintained the right hon. Gentleman had done, for the mere purpose of serving his own ends was a very serious view to take of his duties. He had called himself a middle-aged man in a hurry, and he wanted to do these things in the shortest possible time. He saw in the clearing of these lands his task made easier. He saw that he would be able to use these cattle-drives as a fulcrum with which to get from the House of Commons a stringent Act giving him greater compulsory powers, and he saw large stretches of country which he wanted to get being thrown into his hands without any Act of Parliament. Any person who for these selfish reasons would allow the state of lawlessness. which had existed now during the whole of the right hon. Gentleman's term of office, to go on, was not worthy of being a Minister of the Crown—he was not worthy of being allowed inside the walls of the House of Commons at all. There was a quotation which he particularly desired to place before the House of Commons. They had had that afternoon, he thought from the hon. Member for Durham, a quotation from a speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India. He commended this quotation to the earnest attention of hon. Members opposite. Speaking at Arbroath on 21st October last, the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "We have somehow or another, wisely or unwisely, by a right policy or an erroneous policy—we have got to maintain order. Disorder, whatever your ultimate policy may be, at any rate violent disorder, must be put down. and that with a firm hand."

Those were the words of a statesman. He wanted to know how these two diametrically opposite policies — the policy as set forth by the Secretary of State for India and the policy set forth on the previous day by the Chief Secretary—could emanate from the same Cabinet. How was it possible for a Cabinet which endorsed every action of every individual member of the Cabinet to be in favour of both these policies? How was it possible for the Chief Secretary to maintain friendly relations with the Secretary for India when their policies were so diametrically opposite? The words which he would particularly dwell upon in the quotation were "Whatever your ultimate policy may be, disorder, at any rate violent disorder, must be put down, and that with a firm hand." That was exactly the policy he and his friends advocated for Ireland at the present time. Whatever the ultimate policy of the Government might be whether or not it was to clear every inch of ground in the West of Ireland that was suitable for planting these uneconomic tenants on, he maintained, and the Secretary for India endorsed it, that their first duty was to maintain law and order.

Just before he sat down he would refer to what he had said at the beginning of his speech and that was that one of the curses of the country to which he belonged was that English politicians would not treat it seriously. If every hon. Member opposite would provide himself with a small handbook of the Parliamentary history of Ireland during the last fifty years he would find outstanding on every page the fact that hon. Members below the gangway, most of whom were endowed with the faculty of being able to make a mountain out of a molehill, presented a case which in the majority of instances had only a remote resemblance to the real facts, but which was time after time enough to make hon. Members for English and Scottish constituencies think Ireland was being ill used and ill treated, and that they had wrongs which required instant redress. What Ireland required more than any other thing in the world was to be left alone. He asked hon. Members opposite to learn that what Ireland required was rest from eternal agitation in this country, and the eternal attention it received from the House of Commons. The Land Act of 1903 was working as well as it possibly could. The only thing required to make the Act absolutely successful was money, and, as the Chief Secretary had observed, that money must be found at all costs to preserve Ireland from terrible disaster. He agreed with the right hon. Gentleman in that. It was the most elementary nonsense for Members to say that the fact the Act was not working faster was a justification for the lawless proceedings which had lately darkened the lives of so many persons in eight or nine counties in Ireland. In his humble judgment it was an insult to the intelligence of any English Member to expect him to believe such a thing.

*MR. KETTLE (Tyrone, E.) said that some of his friends had referred to the length of the speeches made by hon. Members from Ulster. He had no objection to them on that score, for in view of the spirit they had shown in the course of the debate the sooner would Home Rule come to Ireland. This Amendment was an attack at once upon Ireland and Liberalism. It was an attempt to injure Ireland through Liberalism, and to injure Liberalism through Ireland. The speech of the Chief Secretary yesterday was the most brilliant and courageous dealing with any great question since he entered this House. A previous speaker had referred to the unreality of the debate. The Opposition had by this Amendment raised the question of Irish Government, but where were the other questions in which they were supposed to be interested? Such an exhibition of meanness and cowardice had not been given by any great Party in this country for a considerable time. Where was tariff reform? Why was the official Amendment of the Opposition not one dealing with that question? Was not that the question on which they claimed to have won Mid Devon and South Hereford? This debate had collapsed for want of statistics. It had been like a mill trying to grind without any corn to grind. One Member had argued that the absence of criminal statistics in Ireland was the real measure of criminality in that country. That was rather an uncomfortable position for the people of Ireland to be in. If the figures of crime were high they were at once accused of lawlessness, and if they were low, as at present, they were also liable to a like charge. The only speech he listened to with interest was that of the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone. The noble Lord had a hereditary interest in Ireland. What was the theory he put forward? It was that the Anglo-Saxon race had effected a sort of corner and exclusive patent right to civilisation, and that nowhere else in the world, except in this happy country, did people believe in or accept law; while the people of Ireland were given to habitual disorder and were a sort of habitual drunkards from the political point of view. What was his prescription? Coercion on a twenty years lease, renewable for ever. It was really an advantage to find real and unadulterated Toryism put forward by the noble Lord. What did it mean? As had been said, the Attorney-General for Ireland had used language not justified by facts. But the language spoken in heat by the Attorney-General was the language spoken in coolness by the noble Lord. The noble Lord's theory was that the people of Ireland were infected with an incurable inferiority which made them unfit for the management of their own affairs. He (Mr. Kettle) protested against the noble Lord's comparison of the agitation in Ireland to an organised attack on millionaires' mansions in Park Lane. There was no motive of spoliation or confiscation on the part of those engaged in land war in Ireland. They were parties to an Act under which the landlords were receiving a more generous price for their land than had been obtained by any landlords in Europe. What they wanted was to have the Act of 1903 carried into effect, and that the train of broken promises in Ireland should be interrupted by, at any rate, one bright interval. He protested against the deliberate malice of the statement in the Party Press and on the platform in England, that they had sought to deprive anybody having proprietary interests from getting the full market value of their land. When these Opposition critics dropped statistics they fell back upon Judges' charges. He believed it was a rule of order in the House that one was not allowed to attack a Judge except on a Motion for his removal. He was rather sorry that such a Motion was not more frequently brought before the House. He did not wish to name or attack any Judge, but he did think that certain Judges of his acquaintances—at any rate one Judge—should devote his moral energy to paying his hotel bills. [OPPOSITION cries of "Order."] He hoped hon. Gentlemen above the gangway were not in favour of Judges not paying their hotel bills. He would not bring before the House the natural history of Judges in Ireland in their ascent to the Bench. But how were Irish Judges manufactured? [OPPOSITION cries of "Order."]

*MR DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The hon. Member does seem to me to be overstepping the limits of order in speaking of the Judges in this way.

MR. J. DEVLIN: On a point of order I attacked two Judges, and I was not called to order by the Speaker.

*MR. KETTLE said he would conclude that part of his argument by reading a passage from the speech of a distinguished statesman, Mr. Gladstone. speaking in December, 1889, said—

> "The Attorney-General has been rewarded for his jury-packing in Ireland, and his mode of conducting business by being appointed Lord Chief Justice."

*MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order, order! As I understand that applies to some Judge at present on the bench, and is not in order. [NATIONALIST cries of: It is a quotation from Mr. Gladstone.]

*MR. KETTLE: I will leave the application of the quotation from Mr. Gladstone's speech to the House.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Are we not to be allowed to read a quotation from Mr. Gladstone?

*MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I understand that it applies to some Judge at present on the bench, and I ask the hon. Member not to proceed with the quototion.

*MR. KETTLE said that in deference to the ruling of the Deputy-Speaker, he would not pursue that branch of the quotation, but there was another part of it which was entirely general in its reference. Mr. Gladstone, speaking of the difference between these matters in Ireland and England said—

> "When these proceedings go on, do you think it odd that the Irish people have not the same affection that you have, and do not place the same confidence as you are able to place in the Judges of the land."

He did not want to apply that observation of Mr. Gladstone's to any special Judge in Ireland, but he thought hon. Members would be able to make the application for themselves. When the Judges' charges were brought up in condemnation of the people of Ireland he always looked up the paragraph in "Who's Who," to find out under which Government these gentlemen ascended the bench. On this general question of agrarian outrages did the House realise the extraordinary difference that existed in the practice in England and Ireland? When a drunken or malicious tramp set fire to an outhouse or a haystack in England, that was put down as an ordinary crime. It was returned in Ireland as an agrarian offence, even if it was committed without any connection of any kind with an agrarian or popular movement. A very considerable portion of those crimes in Ireland were wanton or malicious, and could be charged to no public movement, and no public movement ever accepted responsibility from them. That ought to be taken into consideration by the House. The Solicitor-General for Ireland had made a speech in the debate of a technical and legal character. He agreed with the criticism of the hon. Member for West Belfast when he said that in order to understand things in Ireland one must be human and humane before one began to be legal. But he was very glad that the Solicitor-General had brought before the House the point that a very good and excellent defence might have been sent up before any jury in regard to the cattle-driving cases. Hon. Gentlemen above the gangway assumed as soon as they got a paragraph about a case from a news-agency that there ought to be a conviction. He did not think that those hon. Members who were so strong on law and order knew much about technical law. He had listened to the evidence in every one of the cases of cattle-driving tried both in the city of Dublin, and at the Wicklow Assizes, but not in a single case from beginning to end was there any evidence whatever of violence or intimidation of a serious character. In every case the affair in question was a peaceful demonstration against the ranching system. He did not for a moment assume that the juries knew anything about the seven Bishops. No doubt their consciences were on the side of the men in the dock, but they listened to the evidence carefully, and found that there was no suggestion of violence, and no suggestion of boycotting. He detested boycotting as much as the Chief Secretary, and he was only sorry that it prevailed so much in fashionable institutions like the British Army, the English Church, and the London clubs. But there was no evidence of boycotting in any one of these cases. Those who imputed motives to the juries in these cases were bound to take into account the technical law and the actual evidence. It was said that they had only the ordinary law in these cases, but he thought they had not only the ordinary law, but a double dose of it. It should be marked that not a single one of those cowardly offences which were put down in the criminal statistics in Ireland as agrarian, had been brought home to the United Irish League or was associated with the popular land movement. Hon. Members from England especially were surprised at the part taken in these debates by the Ulster Unionist Members. The weakness and inherent political vice of that party were touched upon by the hon. Member for West Belfast when he pointed out that there had never come from that quarter a single fruitful suggestion for the solution of any of the problems in Ireland. They only whined about what they called the oppression of minorities in Ireland. It should be noted that two of the gentlemen who took part in this attack upon the Government were gentlemen holding the post of Crown Prosecutor in Ireland under this very oppressive Government. He was not very much surprised at the action taken by the Ulster Unionist Party which had organised this campaign of calumny against the country which had the misfortune to own them. An undue compliment was paid them when they were termed a Party. Ulster Unionism was not a Party; it was only an appetite. If they took away from them the people who held office, the people who hoped for office, the people who had canvassed for office for other people, and who were pushing the claims for office for their brothers and their brothers-in-law, and sons and nephews, the Ulster Unionist Party would be represented by about two Members. Every measure of progress or reform with reference to Irish affairs brought before this House had been met with the persistent organised opposition of the Ulster Unionists. They had opposed the Evicted Tenants Bill, obstructed the Labourers Bill, the Town Tenants Bill, and successive Land and Franchise Bills. They had heard a good deal that night about the law of the United Irish League, but what about the law of the Orange Lodges? The cry came from Ulster about the misdeeds of the Home Rule majority in the House. When hon. Members talked about boycotting, what about the land in a northern town, which was only let out for building on the condition that no Nationalist and no Catholic was to occupy a house? What about the political blackmail of the Estates Commissioners, of which the hon. Member for North Armagh was convicted in this House? He did not want to fight those Gentlemen there, however, because they were fighting them in Ulster, and their death warrant had already been signed. [Ironical cheers.] Well hon. Gentlemen would find it out at the next election. He was not surprised that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the senior Member for Trinity College demanded coercion. Why, he graduated in coercion courts! They formed the milk tap from which the infancy of his profession was fed and from which he had grown to such fatness and dignity. This was an economic question much more than it was a political question. County Meath, as any Member who knew the district was aware, was the most fertile county in Ireland, but the population in fifty years had fallen from 160,000 to 60,000 people. Any Member who went to Queenstown or Derry or the other emigration centres, would see a long line of emigrants file out to the tenders. Landless men drive from a manless land. Hon. Members talked about law and order, but the law had two arms, one of repression and one of reform. If the Government had recourse to the arm of reform and gave it a fair chance and free play, following the lines of the magnificent speech of the Chief Secretary, there would be no need for the arm of repression.

SIR E. CARSON (Dublin University): I should like to make it clear that in the course of the few observations which I have to make in bringing this debate to a close, I shall dwell mainly upon the speeches of the Chief Secretary for Ireland and of the Solicitor General. I am sure the hon. and learned Member who has just sat down, therefore, will excuse me if I do not follow him into the details of his speech. He has referred to me, I do not know whether he meant it to be in complimentary or uncomplimentary terms, as having many years ago now—I am afraid when I was a much younger and more vigorous man—engaged in the struggle of Ireland, which others have had to take up. If he means it as a reproach I will only say that there is a great difference between the view of the hon. and learned Member and my own. Hea dvocates the coercion of the mob; I advocate if necessary the coercion of the law, and if I, in my earlier legal days, was engaged in assisting in putting down tryanny and intimidation in Ireland, I tell him at once, that even after this longish period, when I can perhaps take a better perspective view of the situation, I can say that I have done nothing which I in the least regret or of which I am in the least ashamed. But, after all, this debate has, I think, wandered in many respects very far from the notice which is on the Paper. That notice is of a simple though of a very important character. It regrets that the speech of His Gracious Majesty has "failed to refer to the increase of agrarian crime and disorder in Ireland." The increase of agrarian crime and disorder in Ireland is frankly admitted by the right hon. Gentleman. The Resolution on the Paper goes on to say, "or to give any assurance as to the adoption of measures for the better protection of the lives and properties of your Majesty's subjects." Having admitted as he did that there is an increase to a very serious degree of agrarian outrage in Ireland, when the Chief Secretary is asked what he is going to do for the protection of life and property, in that dramatic way which only he can assume in this House he thumps the box and says, "I will not do anything." I hope I shall not do any injustice to the Chief Secretary when I state in a few moments why he will not do anything, but I at all events start with this, that we have an admission—I think a grave and serious admission in relation to the government of any country under the British flag—as to the increase of outrage, and we have what I think is, to every law-abiding citizen, a disappointing announcement on the part of the Chief Secretary, that he will not do anything beyond what he has been doing for the purpose of putting an end to the evils caused by that increase of crime. The hon. Gentleman who had just addressed us said that he had been fighting shy of statistics. I do not know why he made that observation; I do not know whether he has been in the House while this debate has been going on. I always know, however, that the hon. Gentlemen who speak most freely of the course of events in this House are those who enjoy themselves otherwise than by listening to the speeches. [A NATIONALIST MEMBER: "That is just what you are doing."] All I can say is that I have listened to every speech in this debate except one, and I have taken the trouble to read that. I think that is as much as anybody can be expected to do. There is no use, therefore, in making a charge of this kind. The right hon. Gentleman who moved this Resolution based his whole case upon statistics, which have had to be admitted, and which have not been in the whole course of this debate and never could be explained away. What was the admission of the Chief Secretary? I even took the trouble to read his speech over again, although I am accused of not attending to this debate. The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "The fact is, that the state of certain parts of Ireland at the present moment is not so satisfactory as it was this time last year. I admit it to the full."

Let us start with that. I do not quarrel with the right hon. Gentleman for the statement he made; at the same time I give him no credit for it. He could not help it. The facts and the papers are conclusive, and what are they? Boycotting increased in the year from thirty-four to 116.

MR. BIRRELL: Minor cases.

SIR E. CARSON: Oh! what is a minor case of boycotting?

MR. BIRRELL: Is there no difference between a minor case and a serious case?

SIR E. CARSON: I know that there may be a difference in police classification.

MR. BIRRELL: A very serious difference indeed.

SIR E. CARSON: I know that a serious case is that of a man who very likely every moment of the day holds his life in his hands. Yes, I understand that there are only nine of these cases, and the right hon. Gentleman may take full credit for that. But what are the minor cases? Has the right hon. Gentleman read the three cases mentioned by Judge Curran in the charge to the grand jury of Longford a few days ago? Are they minor cases? [MR. BIRRELL assented]. So they are minor cases. What were these minor cases? One of them was that of a lady who left Sligo to seek employment in Longford, and, because her father was boycotted in Sligo, when she got into employment at Longford she was turned out of it by the ban of the League. What is the next minor case that Judge Curran referred to? A man refused to leave the employment that he had been in for twenty years, and when he died his own brother was refused timber to make a coffin that he could be buried in. And what was the third case? It was that of an old woman who for over twenty years had received at the hands of the parish priest a few pounds for cleaning out the chapel, and because her husband remained in an employment that was not popular even this poor woman was compelled by the priest, at the dictation of the League, to give up that petty employment. These are cases of minor boycotting, and they have increased from thirty four to 116 under the kindly and beneficent rule of the right hon. Gentleman during the last twelve months. What does Judge Curran say about this?—

> "No mercy has been shown to these parties by their opponents, who are merciless in their persecution."

Is it too much to expect that even at the eleventh hour their cases will be taken into consideration by those at whose hands they are entitled not to mercy but to common justice and the protection which the law is bound to give them? I say that if we had no other foundation than that statement of a Judge—when he says that these people have been commended by him to the executive power, but no step has been taken—it is our duty as long as Ireland is governed under the United Kingdom to bring this matter before the House.

MR. BIRRELL: Does the right hon. Gentleman remember how many serious cases there were in 1902?

Sir E. CARSON: If the right hon. Gentleman thinks that an answer, I make him a present of it. I have been very much surprised in the course of this debate, not at the right hon. Gentleman, but at some Members in this House, for the manner in which they have received the reading of the reports of the charges of the Judges. The right hon. Gentleman, I do him the justice to say, has not said a single word against it. But is there any better method of obtaining an absolutely fair opinion on the condition of the country than the charges of the Judges to the grand juries on materials laid before them—by whom? By the right hon. Gentleman himself. These are not materials taken at random by some cursory writer of the Press from what are called the ordinary sources of information. These are the returns ordered by the right hon. Gentleman. There is no evidence of a more trustworthy character that can be laid before the House than the evidence of these Judges. And may I quote a high authority for that purpose? Listen to what a member of the Government has said about this—

> "The statement as it comes from Mr. Justice O'Brien is one of the most solemn that Parliament could consider. It is in relation to the Judge's charge."

That was the statement of the hon. Member for South Tyrone at a time when he was much more anxious about the liberty of the poor people of Ireland than he is now. That was the time when the hon. Member did not think it was an answer to tell poor people who were boycotted and denied the necessaries of life that one of the banks of Dublin had paid a good rate of interest. The habit in this House of jeering and sneering at the Judges when they have done their duty as best they can, very often under the most difficult circumstances, is one against which I venture to enter my most solemn protest. They have been sneered at on this side of the House and on the other during the whole course of this debate, and I say that the Judges who draw attention to these matters, and who stand up against mob law, are deserving of every praise and not of condemnation. If I want authority to support me in that, may I draw attention of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen to a statement made by a great man only a few days ago, namely, the President of the United States of America. President Roosevelt said—

> "No man should lightly criticise a Judge, and no man should even in his own mind condemn a Judge unless he is sure of the facts. If a Judge is assailed for standing up against public folly, and above all against mob violence, every man should immediately rally to his support."

I have called attention to the statements of Judge Curran as regards boycotting, and I was glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman last night describe boycotting as the negation of Christianity and the repudiation of humanity. Indeed, that is what I should have expected from him. I think that is a very apt description of boycotting. But how many men has the right hon. Gentleman brought to justice during the last twelve months for the "negation of Christianity and the repudiation of humanity"? How many men has he attempted to bring to justice in that time? Not one. Ponder this fact for a moment. The increase of that class of cases has been from thirty-four to 116, and no single individual is even attempted to be brought before a Court of Justice to be punished for this negation of Christianity and the inhuman conduct pointed out by Judge Curran. I pass then from the question of boycotting to that of police protection. Police protection by patrol has increased from 150 cases to 222 cases, as I understood the figures the right hon. Gentleman gave us last night. What does that mean? Let us not gloss over these figures. They are all grim realities. It means that in 222 cases—and always, be it remembered, confined only to a few counties in Ireland—night and day you have to have police patrolling in numbers in and around the houses and dwellings of the people to protect them from the terrible outrages which otherwise it is anticipated by the Government might be perpetrated on their persons or property. I come to the next head. The right hon. Gentleman stated that crime against the person has increased from nineteen to twenty-six cases. On this account, how many men have been brought to justice? I do not think one.

Mr. BIRRELL: No arrests.

Sir E. CARSON: No. Twenty-six cases and not one person brought to justice. Cases of firing into houses have increased from twenty to sixty-six cases. They have more than trebled. Cases of firing outside the house have increased from fourteen to twenty-six. I do not draw the fine distinction which the right hon. Gentleman does as to whether you fire into the kitchen when the man is in his bedroom or into the bedroom when the man is in his kitchen. My mind is not of that dialectical or intellectual kind. I look upon it all as being part of one grave and great conspiracy against the law for the purpose of intimidating people who will not, as it is called in Ireland, "fall into line," and who are not allowed to carry on their occupation as they would like to do Whether it is in the bedroom or in the kitchen the object is the same, and that object is to teach the people that the law of the mob is superior to that of the right hon. Gentleman. Here we can have no comparisons, because this has grown up during the year, but here we have, in addition to the agrarian outrages of which I have spoken, 381 cases of cattle-driving in five or six months. Will the House picture to itself what the condition of the country must be in which 381 of these cases have occurred? What condition of affairs do these cattle-drives bring about? Let me call the attention of the House to a statement which shows the object and effect of this cattle-driving. It is a statement made by the hon. Gentleman who is now being punished for having infringed the law. This is what he says—

> "The only way in which progress can be made is by the people themselves making the ranches unsaleable. In Roscommon ten ranches have been cleared and have been run into meadow. No man would take a patch of the meadows, no man work upon them. Even the crows are afraid to fly over them, they are so well boycotted. That state of things is brought about not by resolution, but by the men and women banding themselves together and letting it be clearly seen that whoever touches the ranches is the enemy of the people."

Does the right hon. Gentleman think that ten ranches being given up and abandoned and left to run derelict is a thing that will lead to prosperity in the economic conditions of Ireland? That is the meaning of cattle-driving, and that is the class of case that has leapt up to 381 during the last six months. I shall deal with cattle-driving in detail in a moment, but at this point I will just say that I think a more disastrous speech than the one which the right hon. Gentleman made last night has seldom been delivered in this House by any responsible statesman. I should have thought that by this time the right hon. Gentleman would have learnt that it is a very dangerous thing in Ireland to be the apologist of crime. I have dealt with the record and statistics. But that does not represent the whole of the case as regards agrarian disturbance in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman knows very well that there are a vast number of cases that are not and cannot be returned in statistics. No record is kept of the daily surrenders that are made by men of the rights of their property at the behest of the National League. No record is kept of the fines that are paid in hard cash daily and hourly, as we know, to the League for the purpose of buying the right to carry on business and to carry out the ordinary duties of citizens of the United Kingdom. The Solicitor-General told us this evening—and if I may say so his speech, as his speeches always are, was delivered in the most charming way—that 532 persons had been prosecuted by the Government in relation to agrarian outrages during the last twelve months. I do not know whether he meant in relation to cattle-driving alone, but it does not matter. Why, is not the very fact that this Government, with all its indulgence, have felt compelled to prosecute 532 of these persons an eloquent declaration as regards the state and condition of Ireland? How many of these 532 have been punished? I know very well that the right hon. Gentleman the Attorney-General and his colleagues would never have set these prosecutions on foot without knowing there was a clear case to be brought before the tribunal. How many of the 532 persons have been punished? Not a dozen. And if the Law Officers of the Crown thought it right to prosecute 532 persons and not a dozen have been punished, what about the second part of our Resolution as to the absolute failure, and the breakdown and the paralysis of the law in Ireland? With these statistics of crime before him as to the paralysis of the law, all the right hon. Gentleman, when he is asked what he will do, says is—"I shall do nothing." Why has the law failed in Ireland, even the ordinary law? The Solicitor-General gave us a very interesting account as to his opinions as to why the law has failed in Ireland, viz., that hon. Members on this side of the House have gone about saying that the Government are in league with the cattle-drivers. That is hardly worthy of the Solicitor-General. He was at the trials and knew or ought to have known a good deal more about it. I will tell you how it failed. In the first place it failed before the magistrates because *ex-officio* magistrates came and packed the bench and out-voted the resident magistrates. What is my authority for that? The statement which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary made in excusing himself at Southampton. I should like to ask him this one question: What are these corrupt magistrates doing now? Are they still on the bench? The right hon. Gentleman says he has done everything possible under the ordinary law to bring about a better state of affairs in Ireland. We know that at the present moment these very magistrates are there doing from day to day exactly what they were doing three months ago. There was one case in which the magistrates on the bench referred to the statement of a noble Lord, Lord Denman, in the other House, in which he said that the Government did not look upon it as a serious crime. What was the statement of the magistrate who adjudicated?

> "When the Government do not look upon this—I quote the words of Lord Denman—as a serious crime, are we magistrates, living in the midst of these people, to look upon it as a serious crime?"

That is why cases have broken down before juries. I think the Solicitor-General really gives us a great deal too much credit when he tells us that the one thing that was influencing the minds and the wishes of the juries of Dublin was what hon. Members on this side of the House had been saying. No, that was not the defence. I have read the accounts of these cases, and I say that what was put forward by the counsel for the defendants was, first, the statement of Lord Denman that the Government did not look upon this as a serious matter. There was a graver matter, and it was—

> "If the Government are in earnest and serious about these matters why have they not prosecuted the ringleaders? Are we jurors of Dublin to be asked at the bidding of the Government, who have not got the courage themselves seriously to prosecute those who are giving rise to all this lawlessness in Ireland, to prosecute these mere dupes and corner-boys and in some way or other redeem the courage of the Government?'

I tell the Solicitor-General this—and I speak as an ex-law officer for Ireland and also for England: If you adopted any such course in this country, aye, in this city, and brought up the dupes and refused to prosecute the real criminal and ringleader, there is not a jury in the City of London or in England who would give you a conviction. I say more: There is not one who ought to give a conviction in such a case.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. CHERRY): Oh, oh.

SIR E. CARSON: The right hon. Gentleman is very indignant.

MR. CHERRY: I am.

SIR E. CARSON: But is it not well that "the jury should be used to get at the real expression of the opinion of the people and what they think of the Executive who are in power for the time being"? I am sorry I must pass on very quickly, for I must only occupy one or two moments more in dealing with this question. The right hon. Gentleman has given us a reason for allowing this state of things to go on. He has told us that after all you must look at the origin of the crime and at the hopes held out to these people. I wish I had plenty of time to argue that question with him. All I can say is, no more dangerous proposition can be laid down by this House than that pending the redress of grievances you are to allow people any latitude in the commission of crime. I dissent entirely from the suggestion that any policy coming from this side of the House gave rise or ought to have given rise to any hopes that those great ranches were to be broken up and that the grazing industry was to be destroyed in Ireland. What is likely to be the effect in Ireland and upon those who are asked to pay the taxes in England for the purpose of raising this money if this kind of crime is to be allowed to go on? Some of these cases were those of men who had bought their land under the Purchase Acts, and they were trying to earn the instalments to pay into the British Exchequer. They have been driven out by these cattle-drivers for whom you now make an apology because it suits you on the present occasion. I do not know how far this is to be allowed to go on, but, if you are going to say, because there is not enough land to go round in Ireland, therefore you are going to excuse and palliate deeds of this kind, I say you are preaching Socialism pure and simple, and Socialism of a more advanced type, I venture to think, than anything that has been put forward by hon. Members inside or outside this House who are said to have raised the red flag. The truth of the matter is that the Government are in an impossible position, and I will tell them why. The right hon. Gentleman said last night that he was a Home Ruler. We all know it, and he has a perfect right to be a Home Ruler. Yes, every man on the Government Bench is a Home Ruler. They are Home Rulers, but they are Home Rulers without the courage to put their policy before the country. They are Home Rulers and would tell you "our hearts' belief is that all this difficulty arises because the Irish people have not got a Parliament of their own." Holding these opinions they dare not try to enforce them, and at once any person can see the weakness of the situation; because if men who believe that is the only remedy go on attempting to govern Ireland as still part of the United Kingdom they are at the same time trying to run Home Rule and Unionism under a united Parliament; and, believe me, no Government has ever been able to pursue a policy of that kind without coming absolutely to grief. I must apologise to my right hon. friend for not leaving him longer time to speak, but I have had to deal with a good deal of matter. I will conclude by reading a statement which was made in a somewhat similar debate which seems to me even now to fit the situation. It is a quotation from the hon. Gentleman who sits opposite and whose opinions are always so valuable because they are always so variable, and they are always delivered in such moderate language as to commend themselves even to the most moderate men in the House. Here is what he said—

> "It is a definite matter of urgent importance. He said that now nobody could challenge that assertion and he maintained this that before they disestablished churches, before they wrecked the empire, before they made a laughing stock of the English Constitution; aye, even before they closed public houses or attempted to close them, which they were not going to do, he said, even before that they were bound to see that every poor man and woman in County Clare had the protection of the law to which he or she was entitled."

I am quite satisfied that that should be my last word.

*THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. CHERRY, Liverpool, Exchange): The speech which we have just listened to from the right hon. Gentleman is the greatest example in my experience of what exaggerated and inflamed rhetoric may do and can do without any solid basis of fact and without a single practical suggestion as to what the Government should do under the circumstances. The right hon. Gentleman enlarged in terrific terms upon the terrible evils of boycotting, and in proof of his assertion he mentioned three cases. But he did not mention the fact, which he knows and which has been referred to again and again in these debates, that the amount of boycotting in Ireland now in 1908 or at the end of 1907 is a great deal less than it was in 1902 when his Government was in power. If the House will allow me, I will again mention the figures. In 1902 there were returns of forty-one cases of serious boycotting in Ireland. In the year 1907 there were nine. The right hon. Gentleman asked what are the Government doing—are they abandoning their functions of preserving law and order. I want to know what was the Government of 1902 doing. Were not they doing exactly the same as we are doing, giving every protection we can to boycotted persons, bringing to justice any person who commits an offence against the law, and striving to maintain the law and to maintain the peace of every individual in the country?

SIR E. CARSON: If the right hon. Gentleman asks me the question, I am entitled to say that in 1902 the Government did proclaim certain countries under the Crimes Act.

*MR. CHERRY: I think if the right hon. Gentleman will look at the statistics and at the Criminal Returns he will find that there were no prosecutions for boycotting in Ireland in 1902.

MR. WYNDHAM (Dover): I am sure the right hon. Gentleman would not purposely mislead the House. I only wish to inform him that he is in error on that point, because in that state of affairs it was the duty of the Government to proceed with prosecutions under the Crimes Act, and they fulfilled that duty.

*MR. CHERRY: I do not understand the interruption of the right hon. Gentleman. I asked whether there were any prosecutions for boycotting under the Crimes Act in 1902. I believe there were not. I may be in error but as far as my recollection of the figures goes there were none. So much for boycotting. Time is short and I wish to deal with more serious matters than boycotting, because I think even the right hon. Gentleman would admit, though he takes such a serious view of boycotting, that there are other and more serious crimes, and I think I am entitled to ask the attention of the House to the condition of Ireland in the year 1907 as regards crime generally and not as regards one particular form of crime alone. The right hon. Gentleman apparently disregards the figures, but the House will be astonished to hear that if you take any form of serious crime and go down through the list you will find, with one exception which I will point out in a few minutes, not only that there was less crime in Ireland in 1907 than in any year since 1902, but that it was very little more than half the amount of the average of the five years preceding. These are remarkable facts. Now I will take first the most serious crime known to the law—murder—and bear in mind, I am talking of crime generally now and not confining myself to one particular class of crime. In 1902 according to the Returns, there were thirty-nine cases of murder in Ireland. That is not a very large number. I do not say that it is. As compared with England I daresay it is comparatively small. In the year 1905, which is a year we are told of profound peace under a Unionist administration, there were thirty-six cases. In the year 1906 when the present Government came into power and when, of course, all the disorder at once broke out again, there were nineteen cases. And how many cases does the House suppose there were of murder in 1907? Exactly seven, about one-fifth of the number in 1902. The average number of cases for the five years preceding 1907 was thirty-nine. The number in 1907 was seven. And yet we are told that Ireland is seething with crime and disorder. Take, next, attempts to murder. They fell from eight in 1902 to three in 1907. Assaults of all kinds, which are serious things—woundings, felonious assaults and common assaults—the average number for the five years preceding 1907 was 315, and the number in 1907 was 177, very little more than half the number. If you go down the list—I regret to say I have not time to do so now—but if you take offences against property you find exactly the same result. In some classes of crime, there has been an increase in 1907 as compared with 1906, as in the case of riots and affrays which have risen from eight to eleven. If you go back to 1905, the year when Ireland was a paradise of peace according to hon. Gentlemen opposite, you will find that there were fourteen riots and affrays as compared with eleven. I cannot understand why agrarian crime should be worse than any other form of crime. Is it because property in land is more sacred? Is the life of the landlord more sacred than the life of the poor wife who has been murdered by her husband? Hon. Gentlemen opposite always speak as if the only class in the community that is worthy of protection is their own class. As regards both person and property I think all classes ought to be equally protected. But I am willing to take the test that hon. Gentlemen are so anxious for. They want to know about agrarian crime, and they are technically right because the Amendment deals only with agrarian crime, that being as I said, the only matter in their opinion worthy of consideration. Now take agrarian crime—agrarian murders. I have had prepared for me in quinquennial periods the number of agrarian outrages in Ireland, and I will give the House the result very shortly, coming from 1880 down to the present time. The House has been told that there were last year 372 agrarian outrages—a terrible total!—which called for the immediate attention of Parliament, and that there was an increase over the preceding year, an increase, I agree, of 138. Does the House realise what the number of agrarian outrages in 1881 was? Hon. Members laugh, I do not know why. The number was 4,439—more than ten times the number of last year—and yet we are told by the Member for South Derry and in another place by the Marquess of Londonderry that Ireland was never in such a state of disturbance as at present. The number has come down from 4,439 to 372. When you take the more serious cases you find the result is still more startling. Take the case of agrarian murder. The average number of agrarian murders in the five years 1881–85 was ten. In 1886–90, when the Crimes Act was in force, it was 4·4. During the years 1906 and 1907 I am happy to say there was not one single agrarian murder in Ireland; and yet the House has been told Ireland is seething in crime and disorder. [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh, oh."] If hon. Members were speaking in regard to any other country in Europe being in disorder they would readily quote the number of murders. Have hon. Members for Ireland compared the number of murders in such places as Russia, Macedonia, or any one of the South American Republics? Have they reflected what is the number of murders in England? Take, next, assaults endangering life. The average number for the first period of five years I have mentioned was thirteen, for the second period eight, and last year three. Taking incendiary fires, they have fallen from 192 in the first period to thirty-eight in 1907. In ordinary crime, the only increase has been in intimidation. These cases were mostly sending threatening letters, and the persons who received them treated them with contempt. When the more serious crimes have been got rid of, as they have been got rid of, threatening letters become matters which we can disregard altogether. They are only serious when they lead to crime. The policy of the Government has been clear; it is to enforce the ordinary law by the ordinary means, and to give everybody a fair trial. We believe that by abolishing jury-packing and not resorting to exceptional laws we shall gain what we cannot otherwise gain—we shall get the people on the side of law instead of against it. By this means we shall teach the people that the criminal law is not the enemy of the common people but their friend, that its object is to protect and not to oppress them. Our policy will tend to make the people sympathise with the law instead of obstructing it and trying in every way to prevent its operation. Jury-packing has been mentioned. In one of the trials before the Courts in Dublin, after there had been two or three disagreements, an official connected with the Castle came to me and said he had made a list of the jury panel and that there were thirty-nine who were thoroughly reliable. If I had exercised my power as Attorney-General of standing aside all the jurors except those thirty-nine, I could have made sure of a conviction in the case. I do not wish to name the official who gave that information. [OPPOSITION cries of "Name."] I shall not give the name. My reply was that I would far rather have a hundred acquittals than a conviction obtained by such means; I would rather fail to convict in a hundred cases than pollute the very fountain of justice by packing the jury. I believe that by administering the ordinary law fairly and impartially we shall do more for the peace and good government of Ireland than by resorting to the Crimes Act or any of the exceptional methods adopted by our predecessors to obtain convictions. The object of the Government has been not so much to punish cattle-drivers as to stop cattle-driving, and in that we have succeeded, because the number of cases in November last was 108, in December eighty-one, and in January this year the total has fallen to thirty-four. I think, therefore, that I am entitled to claim that the decrease of cattle-driving is in large measure due to the policy of the Government. I firmly believe that if we had adopted the opposite policy; if we had filled the gaols of Ireland with cattle-drivers, we should have increased cattle-driving and produced other and worse crimes as well. My speech to the jury at Wicklow has been twisted and turned outside this House as if I had said that Ireland was last year in a state of anarchy. I never said anything of the kind. I always thought that cattle-driving was a very dangerous and very foolish process, and I never condoned it. But, anxious as I was to stop it, I was not prepared to go outside the ordinary law, and in following that course the Government have acted best in the interests of peace. Some cases of boycotting have been referred to. Now, I happen to know well the McCann case which has been mentioned, and I have no hesitation in saying that it has been grossly exaggerated. Mr. McCann carries on the business of a grazier and he has a large shop. His farm is fully stocked with cattle and his cattle are protected. His shop is open and he is doing a large trade, and all this talk about terrible persecution is exaggerated rhetoric. I know there are certain evils in Ireland as in England, and in every other country in the world, but Ireland is no worse than other countries, and any Irishman who says it is so is not a good Irishman. Ireland has been in subjection to the rule of another country for centuries, and the effect of that has been to turn the people against the law. The object of the Government is to alter that feeling, to make Irishmen friendly to the law, instead of being opposed to it, and if we succeed in doing that we shall accomplish more for the peace and prosperity of Ireland than we could do by any amount of coercion.

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 115 ; Noes, 414. (Division List No. 3.)

AYES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Aubrey,-Fletcher Rt.Hn. SirH.
Balcarres, Lord
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Barrie, H.T. (Londonderry, N.)
Beach, Hn.Michael HughHicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bowles, G. Stewart
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Bull, Sir William James
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cavendish, Rt.Hn.Victor C.W.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E)
Chamberlain, RtHn.J.A(Worc.
Clark, GeorgeSmith (Belfast, N
Clive, Percy Archer
Coates, E. Feetham (Lewisham
Collings, Rt.Hn.J(Birmingh'm
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, CharlesCurtis(Antrim, S.
Cross, Alexander
Dalrymple, Viscount
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duncan, Robert(Lanark,Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fell, Arthur
Fetherstonhaugh, Godfrey
Fletcher, J. S.
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gordon, J.
Guinness, Walter Edward
Haddock, George B.
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hardy, Laurence(Kent,Ashf'rd
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heaton, John Henniker
Helmsley, Viscount
Hill, Lord Arthur (West Down)
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hills, J. W.
Houston, Robert Paterson
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. SirJohn H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt.Hn. Col.W.
Keswick, William
Kimber, Sir Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour(Hull)
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Lee, ArthurH(Hants.,Fareham
Lockwood, Rt.Hn. Lt.-Col.A.R
Long, Col. CharlesW.(Evesham
Long, Rt.Hn. Walter (Dublin,S
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
M'Arthur, Charles
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Magnus, Sir Philip
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Morrison-Bell, Captain
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Nicholson, Wm. G. (Petersfield
Nield, Herbert
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parker, Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, HerbertPike(Darlington
Percy, Earl
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Randles, Sir John Scurrah
Ratcliff, Major R. F.
Rawlinson, John FrederickPeel
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts, S.(Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Rothschild, Hon. LionelWalter
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Sandys, Lieut.-Col.Thos.Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Abel H.(Hertford, East)
Smith, F.E. (Liverpool, Walton
Smith, Hon. W.F.D. (Strand)
Stanley, Hon.Arthur(Ormskirk
Starkey, John R.
Staveley-Hill, Henry (Staff'sh.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt.Hn.J.G(Oxf'dUniv.
Thornton, Percy M.
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Warde, Col. C. E. (Kent, Mid)
Wilson, A.Stanley (York, E.R.)
Winterton, Earl
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Younger, George

Tellers for the Ayes.—Viscount Valentia and Mr. Forster.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland D.
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Alden, Percy
Allen, A.Acland(Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt.Hn.Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)

Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.
Baring, Godfrey(Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Sir John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Barry, Redmond J. (Tyrone,N.
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, Hon. Hubert
Beck, A. Cecil
Bell, Richard
Belloc, Hilaire Joseph Peter R.
Benn, SirJ.Williams(Devonp'rt
Benn, W.(T'w'r Hamlets,SGeo.
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bethell, SirJ.H(Essex,Romf'rd
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W.
Boland, John
Bottomley, Horatio
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brodie, H. C.
Brunner, J.F.L.(Lancs., Leigh)
Brunner, RtHnSirJ.T(Cheshire
Bryce, J. Annan
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt.Hn.SydneyCharles
Byles, William Pollard
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt.HnRichardKnight
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Channing, Sir Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Churchill, Rt. Hon. Winston S.
Clancy, John Joseph
Clough, William
Clynes, J. R.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, SirWm.J(S.Pancras, W
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, CH(Sussex,EGrinst'd
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Crosfield, A. H.
Crossley, William J.
Cullinan, J.
Curran, Peter Francis
Dalmeny, Lord
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan- (Cardigan
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dewar, Sir J. A. (Inverness-sh.)
Dickinson, W.H.(St.Pancras,N
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Dobson, Thomas W.
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C.(Barrow-in-Furness
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, MajorE.Martin(Walsall
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Sir Francis (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Essex, R. W.
Esslemont, George Birnie
Everett, R. Lacey
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Ffrench, Peter
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone, Rt.Hn.HerbertJohn
Glen-Coats, Sir T.(Renfrew, W.
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Sir Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Grayson, Albert Victor
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Griffith, Ellis J.
Grove, Archibald
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, RtHnSirW.Brampton
Gwynn, Stephen Lucius
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'rh
Harmsworth, R.L.(Caithn'ss-s)
Harrington, Timothy
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harvey,W.E. (Derbyshire,N.E.
Harwood, George
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemmerde, Edward George
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson,J.M. (Aberdeen,W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hodge, John
Hogan, Michael
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hope,W.Bateman (Somerset,N
Horniman, Emslie John
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jackson, R. S.
Jacoby, Sir James Alfred
Jardine, Sir J.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones,Sir D.Brynmor(Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kettle, Thomas Michael
Kilbride, Denis
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh A. (Donegal, W.)
Lea,Hugh Cecil(St.Pancras, E.
Leese,Sir Joseph F.(Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex,Harwich
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald,J.M. (Falkirk B'ghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down,S.
MacVeigh,Charles (Donegal, E.
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W.
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mallet, Charles E.

Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Mond, A.
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. G.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Muldoon, John
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John (Kerry, East)
Murphy, N. J. (Kilkenny, S.)
Myer, Horatio
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Newnes, Sir George (Swansea)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, Charles N. (Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partingdon, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pearson, W. H. M. (Suffolk, Eye
Perks, Robert William
Philipps, Col. Ivor (S'thampton)
Philipps, J. Wynford (Pembroke
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Phillips, John (Longford, S.)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Pollard, Dr.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John (Norfolk, E.)
Priestley, W. E. B. (Bradford, E.)
Pullar, Sir Robert
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Althelstan
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'th)
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Richardson, A.
Rickett, Sir J. Compton
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E. (Dundee)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann, Sir C. E. (Manchester)
Scott, A. H. (Ashton-under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smyth, Thomas F. (Leitrim, S.)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Albert (Staffs., N.W.)
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.)
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Tennant, Sir Edward (Salisbury
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomasson, Franklin
Thompson, J. W. H. (Somerset, E
Thorne, William
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Verney, F. W.
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Waldron, Laurence Ambrose
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walsh, Stephen
Walters, John Tudor
Walton, Joseph
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent
Ward, W. Dudley (Southampton
Wardle, George J.
Waring, Walter
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Rt. Hn. E. (Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, Henry A.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Whitbread, Howard
White, Sir George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williamson, A.
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, Hon. G. G. (Hull, W.)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Winfrey, R.
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

Main Question again proposed.

And, it being after Eleven of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

Adjourned at twelve minutes after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Wednesday, 5th February, 1908.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Bristol Docks Bill [H.L.]; Llanelly and Burry Port Water Board Bill [H.L.]. Presented; and read 1ª.

Aire and Calder Navigation Bill [H.L.]; Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.]; Law Guarantee Trust and Accident and United Legal Indemnity Insurance Societies Bill [H.L.]; Rochester Bridge Bill [H.L.]; South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Bill [H.L.]. Presented; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACT, 1901, AND NOTICE OF ACCIDENTS ACT, 1906.

Preliminary tables of cases of industrial poisoning, fatal and non-fatal accidents, and dangerous occurrences in factories, workshops, etc., during the year 1907.

COLONIES: ANNUAL.

No. 554. Southern Nigeria (Report for 1906).

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894.

Orders in Council, dated 25th January, 1908—Respecting the use on board passenger ships of apparatus for distilling water and defining the quantity of fresh water to be carried. Directing that such things as, by the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, are authorised to be done by a British Consular Officer, shall, in the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria, be done by the Chief Officer of Customs.

NAVAL AND MARINE PAY AND PENSIONS ACT, 1865.

Orders in Council, dated 25th January, 1908, approving memorials of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty praying sanction to—The payment of continuous extra pay to certain naval ratings at the Bombay Naval Depot. The extension to the Atlantic Station of the scale of free conveyance of baggage and mess stores authorised for other stations. The extension of the allowance for playing the harmonium during Divine Service to certain of His Majesty's Ships in which the allowance has not heretofore been paid.

CHURCH TEMPORALITIES (IRELAND).

Accounts of the Irish Land Commission in respect of Church Temporalities in Ireland, for the year ended 31st March, 1907, and from 26th July, 1869 (the date of the Irish Church Act), to 31st March, 1907; together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877.

Statute made by the governing body of Christ Church, Oxford, on the 23rd October, 1907, altering and amending Statute XVI., Clauses 19 and 20, of the Statutes of the House. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. [No. 4.]

BANK OF ENGLAND.

Applications made by the First Lord of the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the Governor and Deputy Governor of the Bank of England, for advances to Government authorised by Parliament from 5th January, 1907, to 5th January, 1908, with Minutes of the Court of Directors thereon, and answers of the said Court thereto. Delivered (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

THE TREATMENT OF IMPRISONED WOMAN SUFFRAGISTS.

* **EARL RUSSELL** rose to ask His Majesty's Government why the women imprisoned in connection with the recent woman suffrage demonstrations are not being treated as first class misdemeanants.

His Lordship said: Your Lordships will probably be aware that in connection with some recent disturbances at the private residences of Cabinet Ministers, several of the agitating ladies known as "suffragettes" are at present imprisoned. I am not concerned on this occasion to defend, and it is not the least necessary for the purposes of the Question that I should defend,

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

the particular actions taken in this particular case. The actions, as your Lordships will recollect, consisted in attending somewhat early in the morning at the private residences of Cabinet Ministers and ringing the bell with a view to interviewing those Ministers; but I think I am right in saying that one and all declined to be interviwed. Apart from the fact that even a Cabinet Minister may be allowed to have a private life and a private house, it was perhaps a little unkind of these ladies to disclose to the world the exact hour at which Ministers rose from their slumbers and began their day. But the actual disturbances which were created were of a very slight character. There was no doubt technical disorder. There were scenes in the street, speeches delivered, the ringing of bells and matters of that sort which no doubt amounted to technical disorder, but which, I think your Lordships will agree, did not amount in any sense to any real crime or to anything deserving of criminal punishment. When these ladies were brought in due course before the magistrates—I think there are over a dozen at this moment in Holloway—they were in most cases invited to find sureties to keep the peace for a certain length of time, and it was on their declining to find such sureties that they were, in default, committed to prison for various terms—as a rule, I think, six weeks.

It may be, and probably will be, said said that these ladies had it entirely within their own power to stay out of prison by finding sureties, and that if they had fulfilled the condition imposed by the magistrate they would not have been imprisoned at all. That is literally true, but I think your Lordships should consider what the pledge demanded from them was. The finding of sureties to keep the peace amounted to a pledge that they would not continue agitating for a political cause which they had very much at heart—that they would not continue agitating in the way which they think is successful, whatever your Lordships may think about it. Therefore it amounted to inviting them to give up their rights of agitation, as they regarded them. I think your Lordships will agree that, under these circumstances, it was hardly reasonable to expect them to comply with the condition, and that it would have been better and fairer to have sentenced them to prison in the first instance. Your Lordships may recollect that in another place, when the rules of procedure were being considered, there was at one time a suggestion that a Member who had been disorderly or contumacious should be suspended, not merely for a definite term but until he had expressed regret for his disorder. It was felt, I think universally, that that was asking a man to do more than he ought to be required to do. I think the cases are somewhat parallel, and that it was not a reasonable or fair demand to make upon these ladies, that they should be asked to give up for a certain length of time the particular course of agitation upon which they were engaged, and in which they believed as a righteous cause, and a proper way of asserting their rights.

In previous cases, ladies who have been committed in these circumstances have been treated—not always in the first instance, but I think I am right in saying always ultimately—as first class misdemeanants in prison. Your Lordships probably know that these ladies are now imprisoned as misdemeanants of the second division; but perhaps it is not realised what a very wide difference exists between the two divisions. In the second division they have to wear ordinary prison clothes—that is to say, these ladies, many of whom are persons of culture and refinement, have to wear a lot of old clothes brought out of the jumble store of the prison, ill-fitting clogs of some sort, not necessarily a pair; and they are served with the gruel, or whatever the fare is, in the ordinary wooden vessels, and it has to be eaten with the ordinary wooden spoons. As far as costume, food, confinement, and exercise go, I think I am right in saying that they are subject, in their imprisonment, to all the hardships and to all the degradations to which any ordinary prisoner is exposed. In the first division a prisoner is enabled to wear his or her own clothes, to have his or her food and to be supplied with books and newspapers from the outside world. What you, in fact, do is to confine prisoners of the first division within the prison, and deprive them of their liberty without inflicting upon them any particular hardship or any particular degradation.

A similar Question to that of which I have given notice was put in another place, and the answer given on behalf of the Home Secretary was that he saw no reason to interfere with the decision of the magistrate. I should like that to be considered a little more fully. Is it desired that the agitation, however much your Lordships may dislike it, which these ladies have carried on for the purpose of obtaining the vote, should be stamped out by repressive measures, and by measures of hardship? If that is the view which obtains I see no reason why these ladies should be placed in the second division at all, or why they should not be sentenced in the ordinary way to terms of hard labour. But the experience of history shows that these measures of hardship when applied to people who believe fervently in a cause, have the effect, not of stamping out agitation, but of increasing the earnestness of the agitation, and of making martyrs of those who suffer them. It is as true, as in the case of the history of the early Christian Church, the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church, that from this hardship there grows an increasing feeling and a stronger movement among the very people whom you are seeking to repress. So that if the object is to treat these ladies with hardship in order to put down the agitation, I submit that it is foolish, is likely to fail, and is indeed pre-destined to fail in its object.

Then, my Lords, if I am told that they are not political offenders, I venture to say that an examination of similar cases in which men have been imprisoned in the first division and treated as political offenders will not support that view. They are political offenders in this sense, that although they may have been quite properly and legally dealt with by the magistrate, the whole object of their offence was a political object. What they sought to gain was not any criminal end, even if the methods which they pursued brought them within the criminal law. What they have tried to gain was a political object, and it is that, I submit, which constitutes a person a political offender. I venture to suggest to the Home Secretary and his advisers, and to your Lordships' House, that it will reflect no credit upon the Government, or upon the system of law and order in this country, if these earnest, delicately nurtured ladies, who are prepared to sacrifice themselves for a cause which they have very much at heart, are to be treated with methods of degradation which are only fittingly applied to criminals. It is quite as much for the honour and reputation of the Government as for the comfort of the ladies themselves that I ask the Home Secretary whether it is not proper and fitting that these ladies should be put in the first division, and treated in a way which political offenders generally are treated, and frequently have been treated, when they have been male offenders. I will ask the noble Lord who represents the Home Office the Question which stands in my name on the Paper, and I trust that his reply may be more favourable than the reply given the other day in another place.

Earl BEAUCHAMP: My Lords, I trust the noble Earl will excuse me if I reply somewhat shortly. He has already told your Lordships that a similar Question to this was put in another place, and the answer which I have to give is exactly the same as that which was then given by the Under-Secretary of State for Home Affairs. The question of what division a prisoner should be placed in is one which by law must be determined by the magistrate, in his discretion. The ladies referred to in the noble Earl's Question have committed an offence against the ordinary law, and the Secretary of State sees no reason to interfere with the magistrates' decision that they should be placed in the second division. The second division was established for the purpose of separating from the worst classes of criminals those prisoners whose previous character is good, and I think therefore it will be agreed that the magistrates have, in the exercise of their discretion, probably taken a step which will meet with the approbation of your Lordships' House.

FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE.

On the Motion for the Adjournment of the House—

The Earl of ONSLOW: Before your Lordships adjourn I should like to ask a question of the noble Earl, the President of the Board of Agriculture, and that is whether there is any truth in the rumour that there has been an outbreak of foot and mouth disease among cattle north of the Tweed.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Earl CARRINGTON): I am sorry to have to say that there is truth in the report, for a telegram was received late last night from Professor Dewar, F.R.C.V.S., Edinburgh, reporting suspected foot and mouth disease in a large herd of dairy cows at Gorgie, Midlothian. Veterinary Inspector Smith, Glasgow, was instructed to visit, and he reports by telegram—

> "Eighty-one cows out of 111, property of John Robertson, Elvan Bank, Gorgie, are affected with foot and mouth disease. Lesions well marked in mouth, feet and udder."

The Chief Veterinary Officer considers that the existence of the disease must be regarded as established, but in view of the importance of the matter he is proceeding himself to Edinburgh to-night, and will advise as to further procedure.

In the meantime Orders are being prepared, and will be issued this afternoon confirming the existence of disease, and prohibiting absolutely the movement of animals in the district surrounding Edinburgh to the South of the Firth of Forth pending full inquiry.

A staff of veterinary inspectors has been dispatched to Edinburgh to search out any other possible centres of disease, and assistance has been dispatched to Mr. Douglas, our General Inspector in Scotland who will conduct the further inquiries, and report at once.

I hope the House will believe that every possible step has been taken to prevent the spread of this terrible disease.

House adjourned at quarter before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 5th February, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

NEW WRIT.

New Writ for the County of Leitrim (North Leitrim), in the room of Charles Joseph Dolan, esquire (Manor of Northstead.)—(*Captain Donelan.*)

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Doncaster Corporation Bill. "To empower the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the borough of Doncaster to construct new roads, tramways, and other works within the borough; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time, and ordered to be read a second time.

PETITIONS.

MARGATE CORPORATION BILL.

Petition for additional Provision; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

LICENSED PREMISES (EXCLUSION OF CHILDREN).

Petitions for legislation; from Barnet; Barnsley; Bath; Blackwood; Brackley; Bridgwater; Cambridge (three); Chesterton; Consett and Blackhill; Cotherston; Eccleshill; Enfield; Friern Barnet and New Southgate; Glossop; Great Yarmouth; Harby; Leicester; Lewes; Longton; Palmer's Green (two); Poplar; Preston (two); Renwick; Retford; Sandhurst; Settle; Sleaford; Southgate; Stoke-on-Trent; Sunderland; Watford; Wibsey; Willenhall (two); Wokingham; Wolverhampton; and Worthing; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING ACTS.

Petitions from Tongham, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table.

OLD AGE PENSIONS.

Petition from Darvel for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY.

Petitions for legislation;—From Ardingley; Bath; Cambridge (four); Harborne; Hertford; Rochdale (two);

South Cave; South London; Stoke Bruern; Thurlby (three): Willington; and, Worksop; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACT, 1901, AND NOTICE OF ACCIDENTS ACT, 1906.

Copy presented, of Preliminary Tables of cases of Industrial Poisoning, Fatal and Non-Fatal Accidents, and Dangerous Occurrences in Factories, Workshops, etc., during the year 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TELEGRAPH (CONSTRUCTION) BILL.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 4th February; *Mr. Sydney Buxton*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 30.]

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877 (OXFORD).

Copy presented, of Statute made by the Governing Body of Christ Church, Oxford, on the 23rd October 1907, altering and amending Statute XVI., Clauses 19 and 20, of the Statutes of the House [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 31.]

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894.

Copies presented, of Orders in Council, dated 25th January 1908, (1) respecting the use on board passenger ships of apparatus for distilling water and defining the quantity of fresh water to be carried; (2) directing that such things as by The Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, are authorised to be done by a British Consular Officer shall, in the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria, be done by the Chief Officer of Customs [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

NAVAL AND MARINE PAY AND PENSIONS ACT, 1865.

Copies presented, of Orders in Council, dated 25th January, 1908, approving Memorials of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty praying sanction to (1) the payment of continuous extra pay to certain Naval Ratings at the Bombay Naval Depôt; (2) the extension to the Atlantic Station of the scale of free conveyance of baggage and mess-stores authorised for other stations; (3) the extension of the allowance for playing the harmonium during Divine Service to certain of His Majesty's ships in which the allowance has not heretofore been paid [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

COLONIAL REPORTS (ANNUAL).

Copy presented of Colonial Report, No. 554 (Southern Nigeria, Annual Report for 1906) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

NATIONAL PHYSICAL LABORATORY.

Copy presented of Report of the Committee appointed by the Treasury to inquire generally into the work now performed at the National Physical Laboratory, Minutes of Evidence, Appendices, and Index, together with a Treasury Minute, dated the 1st February, 1908, recording their Lordships' approval of the recommendations contained in the Report of the Majority of the Committee [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

BREWERS' LICENCES.

Return presented relative thereto [ordered 4th February; *Mr. Runciman*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 32.]

GREEK LOAN.

Account presented up to 31st December, 1907 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 33.]

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Bank of England copy of all Applications made by the First Lord of the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the Governor and Deputy Governor of the Bank of England for advances to Government authorised by Parliament, from 5th January, 1907 to 5th January, 1908 [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 34.]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Malicious Injuries in Ireland.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he will state the number of claims for compensation for malicious injury to property adjudicated upon in Ireland during the six months ending 25th January, the total amount of compensation awarded, and particulars of the injuries for which compensation was given; and whether, in respect of these cases, any persons were made amenable under the criminal law.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The number of claims of the nature referred to which were adjudicated upon during the period named was 349. The total amount of compensation awarded was £7,246. The injuries in respect of which claims for compensation were granted are classified as follows:—

Incendiary fires - -	80
Breaking windows - -	74
Killing or cutting cattle -	20
Injury to gates, fences, &c.	17
Injury to houses, &c. -	16
Injury to crops - - -	13
Injury to farm implements	13
Injury to shop implements	8
Injury to lorries, &c. -	8
Injury to cattle (by driving)	6
Injury to turf - - -	6
Miscellaneous - - -	15
Total -	276

Thirty persons were made amenable under the criminal law in respect of these cases.

Case of Anthrax at Devonport.

SIR F. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether an inquiry has been or will be made into the death by anthrax in the Royal Albert Hospital, Devonport, of John Tidds, a labourer, who has recently been employed in unloading a steamer which arrived from Kurachee with a cargo of grain; and whether, having regard to occasional cases of infection from handling cargoes of hides, wool, and other articles from abroad, representations by circular, and in British Possessions by regulations, have been, or will be, made and communicated to foreign shippers, British consuls, and officials to secure better precautions against infection.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) Inquiries have been made by the factory inspector of the district and the certifying surgeon into this case. It appears that the man had been engaged in the hold of the vessel handling bags containing Kurachee barley; and it is suggested by the certifying surgeon that the infection was conveyed by the sacks. A danger of this kind is obviously one that is very difficult to guard against. The Home Office has circulated cautionary notices for posting in premises where infected material is likely to be handled, and has also, through the Foreign Office, circulated widely to our consuls abroad copies of a series of lectures on anthrax which were delivered some little time ago by the medical inspector of factories. It is difficult to see what further steps can be taken until the advance of scientific inquiry discloses new methods of detecting the danger and new precautions that may be taken to meet it.

Restoration of Holyrood Chapel, Edinburgh.

MR. C. E. PRICE (Edinburgh, Central): To ask the First Commissioner of Works whether his attention has been called to the statement made in Edinburgh by the Earl of Stair, that the trustees under the will of the late Lord Melville had been prevented from carrying out the terms of the trust in reference to the restoration of Holyrood Chapel, Edinburgh; and whether he proposes taking any action in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Harcourt.*) My attention has been called to the statement of the Earl of Stair, which was probably made under some misapprehension. The executors of Lord Leven's will believed that the legal formalities connected with the probate of the estate required an application to the King for a formal decision on the question of the restoration of Holyrood. In view of all the surrounding circumstances, and in consequence of the refusal to act by the persons designated to carry out this portion of the will, I felt it my duty to advise His Majesty that I should, on his behalf, decline to give permission for the work. As the Minister charged with the maintenance of the fabric I accept full responsibility for the advice which I tendered to His Majesty. I propose to take no further action in the matter, which is now closed.

Restoration of Evicted Tenants in County Fermanagh.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH (Fermanagh, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have acquired, or taken steps to acquire, any untenanted lands in the county Fermanagh for the restoration of evicted tenants; if so, on what estates; and what is the area proposed to be acquired.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners have purchased, or are negotiating for the purchase of, untenanted lands on the estates of the following gentlemen in county Fermanagh, viz.:—

J. Armstrong,
Richard Thompson,
John Maguire,
W. D. M. D. Irvine,
Charles G. Adamson,
W. Graham,
James M'Cullagh,
Philip Mulligan,
George Johnson,
R. F. Collum,
Thos. Noble.

These estates comprise some 1,200 acres of untenanted land, about 300 acres of which have already been purchased. The claims of evicted tenants are considered in allotting the lands purchased.

Repayment to Debenture Holders in the Bundoran and Trillick Loan Funds.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the receivers of the Bundoran and Trillick Loan Funds contemplate making any payment to the debenture holders at an early date; and will he suggest to the Loan Fund Board the advisability of issuing some statement to the debenture holders of these and other loan funds as to their prospects of getting repaid their money.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I am informed by the Loan Fund Board that in the case of the Trillick Loan Fund Society the payment to the debenture holders of a dividend of 6s. in the pound was completed last month. The receiver over the Bundoran Loan Fund Society has no funds in hand with which to pay a dividend. The difficulties of collection in that district have been great. The Loan Fund Board do not consider it possible to issue any such statement as is suggested in the latter part of the Question. They cannot anticipate what the results may be of the execution of the warrants granted and outstanding.

Irish Intermediate Examinations—Cost of Age Certificates.

MR. A. ROCHE (Cork): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will consider the advisability of reducing the cost of the certificate of age required from students attending intermediate examinations from its present price of 3s. 6d. to 6d., the price paid for certificates accepted by the National Board, seeing that many of the students attending intermediate schools are the children of very poor parents, and that the price of books, &c., is a heavy tax on them.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) In reply to a somewhat similar Question on 27th June, 1906, my predecessor pointed out that the charge of 3s. 7d. for a certificate of birth is a fixed statutory charge, but that the Commissioners of Intermediate Education had signified their desire for legislation which would have the effect of lowering the charge for certificates procured for the purposes of their examinations. Mr. Bryce promised that the question of legislation would receive the consideration of the Government when a suitable opportunity should arise. No such opportunity has yet arisen.

Cattle-driving in Ireland.

MR. PIKE PEASE (Darlington): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what were the numbers of cattle-drives reported by the

Constabulary during each month of 1907 and during the period 1st to 29th January, 1908, distinguishing the counties in which such drives were committed.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The following table gives the information asked for. There were no cattle-drives in the first three months of 1907 :—

County.	1907.									1908.
	April.	May.	June.	July.	August.	Sept.	October.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan., to 29th.
Donegal	–	–	–	1	1	–	–	–	–	–
Tyrone	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–
Dublin	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	2	–
Kildare	–	–	–	–	–	–	6	10	7	11
King's	1	6	1	–	–	1	1	1	–	–
Longford	–	–	–	–	3	1	–	–	5	1
Louth	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–
Meath	–	–	–	–	5	17	17	28	17	6
Queen's	–	1	2	–	–	–	–	1	–	–
Westmeath	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	11	9	9
Galway, E. Riding	7	19	26	9	2	6	7	13	4	1
Galway, W. Riding	–	1	–	–	–	–	13	22	2	2
Leitrim	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Mayo	–	1	1	–	–	–	–	2	4	1
Roscommon	–	7	1	1	–	–	9	15	22	1
Sligo	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	2	2	–
Clare	–	1	–	–	–	–	1	2	2	2
Cork, E. Riding	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–
Kerry	–	–	–	1	1	–	–	–	–	–
Limerick	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	2	–
Tipperary, N. Riding	–	–	4	–	–	–	–	–	1	–
Tipperary, S. Riding	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	1	–
Waterford	–	–	–	–	–	1	1	–	–	–
Total	9	36	35	13	13	29	57	108	81	34

Scottish Emigrants.

MR. J. D. WHITE (Dumbartonshire): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can say how many emigrants of Scottish nationality sailed from Scottish ports during the year 1907 for Canada, for other British Colonies, and for Foreign countries, respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The following statement gives the information desired by my hon. friend:—

Statement showing the number of Passengers (including both cabin and steerage passengers) of Scottish nationality, who left, or arrived at the ports of Scotland for or from British North America, other British Colonies, and non-European Foreign countries, respectively, during the year 1907.

—	British North America.	Other British Colonies.	Non-European Foreign Countries.	Total.
Out-going passengers from Scottish ports - -	26,366	11	21,737	48,114
In-coming passengers to Scottish ports - -	2,043	—	5,380	7,423
Balance outward - -	24,323	11	16,357	40,691

Labelling of Irish Butter.

MR. RICHARDSON (Nottingham, S.): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, what labelling will be necessary for Irish butter sold to the public which may contain more than 16 per cent. of moisture and up to 24 per cent. of moisture.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) The Board have no authority to determine the manner in which Irish butter containing more than 16 per cent. of water should be sold, so as to avoid giving rise to a complaint by the purchaser under the Sale of Food and Drugs Acts, and it is not desirable that they should express an opinion on the question.

American Gooseberry Mildew.

COLONEL WARDE (Kent, Medway): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he can state the acreage of gooseberry plantations in England; the approximate acreage affected by the American gooseberry mildew; and in what counties the disease is known to exist.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) The Board are unable to state the acreage under gooseberries alone, but 24,179 acres were returned as being under gooseberries and currants combined in 1907. The counties of Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Warwickshire, Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire (parts of Holland), Norfolk, the Isle of Ely, Cambridgeshire, and Huntingdonshire are affected with American gooseberry mildew. Information as to the acreage affected is being obtained, and I will acquaint the hon. and gallant Member with the result.

Small Holdings and the Land Club System.

MR. BRODIE (Surrey, Reigate): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether the Board of Agriculture has received information relating to the land club system initiated at Limpsfield, in Surrey, by Mr. Montague Fordham and others; whether, in view of the fact that this system would appear to be a most valuable one for carrying out the provisions of The Small Holdings and Allotments Act, 1907, and generally for promoting the revival of country life, the Board will support such clubs with funds, and in other ways, and will advise county and parish councils to do the same; whether the Board of Agriculture has yet prepared a model set of rules for land clubs and co-operative societies having for their object the promotion of small holdings or allotments; and, if not, whether it is the intention of the Board to issue such rules at an early date.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) The attention of the Board has been drawn to the proposals to which my hon. friend refers, and we shall watch their development with interest. It would not, however, be within the power of the Board to make grants to clubs such as those which it is intended to constitute, and any applications for assistance should be addressed to the county councils concerned. Parish councils are not empowered to raise moneys for the purpose. The question of the issue of model rules for co-operative small holdings and allotments societies is under consideration.

Aliens Act—Cost of Administration.

MR. STRAUS (Tower Hamlets, Mile End): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can give the cost of administering the Aliens Act up to the end of 1907 from the commencement, and the number of aliens who have been sent back.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The payments from the sub-heads of the Home Office Vote, which relate to the administration of the Aliens Act up to 31st March last, *i.e.*, a period including the financial year 1906–7 and the first three months of the calendar year 1906, amounted to £13,572 12s. 9d. The net expenditure in the current financial year is estimated at £11,400. The alien immigrants, to whom leave to land was refused in the calendar years 1906 and 1907, numbered 493 and 802 respectively, making a total of 1,295. I would repeat what I said in answer to somewhat similar Questions to other hon. Members in February and May last, that the cost of administering the Act covers the whole of its operations, which extend beyond the refusal of leave to land.

Opium Cultivation in India.

SIR H. COTTON (Nottingham, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for India what was the area of land in India under cultivation with opium, and what was the total number of provision chests of opium exported from India, during the past three years 1904–5, 1905–6, and 1906–7.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*)

	Areas (excluding failures).	Chests of provision opium exported.
1904–5 -	587,140	47,855
1905–6 -	613,996	48,833
1906–7 -	553,697	53,588

The acreage here given is for the Bengal and Behar Opium Agencies, which alone furnish provision opium.

Reductions of Wages at Waltham Gunpowder Factory.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): To ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether he is aware that four men at the Waltham Gunpowder Factory were, on Saturday last, reduced from 28s. to 25s 6d. per week, and that five men were reduced from 25s. 6d. to 23s. 6d. per week; will he say what was the respective length of service of each of these men; whether any notice of such reduction was given to them; whether any faults or complaints could be alleged against the said employees; and whether in future he would direct that a fortnight's notice of any reduction be given to the men in order to give them an opportunity to consider the same through their organisation.

(*Answered by Mr. Buchanan.*) Ten men were reduced in rating on 3rd February on account of being put on a lower class of work from that date, sufficient work paid at the higher rate previously received not being available. These reductions are approximately equivalent to the amounts mentioned by the hon. and gallant Member. The men at Waltham Abbey are not paid according to length of service, but according to the nature of the work performed. As much notice of any change in rate is given as is possible, but a fortnight's notice cannot be guaranteed.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

German Navy Estimates.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, whether he can state the total sum voted for material, viz., shipbuilding, repairs, and armaments, in the German Navy Estimates of 1908–1909; and what is the corresponding sum in the British Navy Estimates for the current financial year 1907–1908.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): The figure for Great Britain for 1907–1908 is £11,102,400. So far as can be gathered from the German Estimates, which have not yet been finally adopted, the corresponding figure for Germany for the year 1908–1909 will be £9,479,451.

The Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean.

MR. BOWLES (Lambeth, Norwood): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, whether he can inform the House what are precisely the duties of the newly appointed Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean; are these duties defined by Order in Council, and, if not, how otherwise; do they import any, and if so, what alteration into the authority and functions of the Naval Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean; and is the paramount authority over naval movements in the Mediterranean now exercised by the new Commander-in-Chief.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): It has not been considered necessary to define the duties of the new Commander-in-Chief of the British troops in the Mediterranean by Order in Council. If the hon. Member will kindly refer to a reply which I gave to a Question put on 8th August last by the hon. and gallant Member for the Abercrombie Division of Liverpool he will find a full explanation of the nature of these duties. They do not in any respect affect the authority or functions of the Naval Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean.

Scottish Cavalry Barracks.

MR. YOUNGER (Ayr Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, whether any progress has been made with the selection of a site for new cavalry barracks in Scotland.

MR. HALDANE: The reply is in the negative.

*MR. GULLAND (Dumfries Burghs): Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the suitability of Dumfries, where the War Office owns an excellent site, which will be vacant now that it is proposed to transfer the Militia from there?

MR. HALDANE: Many applications have been received, and all will be considered with the utmost partiality.

Piershill Barracks.

MR. YOUNGER: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War the maximum number of men and horses quartered in Piershill Barracks, when the Scots Greys were stationed there; and the maximum number of men and horses quartered in these barracks since the Royal Artillery were substituted for a cavalry regiment.

MR. HALDANE: The maximum number of men and horses of the Scots Greys quartered in Piershill Barracks was 493 men and 370 horses, and the maximum number of the Royal Field Artillery has been 341 men and 192 horses.

MR. YOUNGER: Are not the figures just given for the Royal Artillery rather more than the average number of Scots Greys at the barracks at the time the right hon. Gentleman declared them insanitary?

MR. HALDANE: I think not, but I will inquire.

County Association Secretaries.

*MR. SMEATON (Stirlingshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the post of secretary to the county association is a civil appointment; whether, if the incumbent is a retired naval or military pensioned officer, he has offered to exempt him from the rule under the Superannuation Act, by which a deduction up to 10 per cent. is made from his salary; and whether the Treasury has given its consent to the offer.

MR. HALDANE: The post is a civil appointment. The Treasury have decided not to declare the funds of county associations to be public funds within the meaning of Rule 1 of the rules under Section 6 of the Superannuation Act, 1887, and accordingly a retired naval or military officer in receipt of pension if employed as secretary to a county association will not be liable to any deduction from his salary as secretary.

*MR. SMEATON: Will the hon. Gentleman be good enough to persuade the Chancellor of the Exchequer to extend the same concession to retired, pensioned naval and military officers in other civil departments?

MR. HALDANE: I must leave my hon. friend to take what action he thinks fit with a view to securing that; I can only remind him that if I had come to any other decision in this case there would have been heavy charges on the counties.

MR. CORRIE GRANT (Warwickshire, Rugby): Will the right hon. Gentleman take care that the county associations are notified of this decision?

MR. HALDANE: I think they have been.

Knutsford Conservatives and the Volunteers.

MR. KING (Cheshire, Knutsford): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that at a meeting held in Knutsford under the auspices of the Knutsford Working Men's Conservative Association on Monday, 13th January, long service medals were presented to members of the local Volunteer Company, and that Captain Young, Adjutant of the Volunteer Battalion, stated at the meeting that he could not conceive of a more favourable opportunity for presenting medals to members of the local auxiliary force; and whether it is in conformity with the King's Regulations that these national awards should be distributed at a meeting ostensibly called for Party purposes.

MR. HALDANE: Nothing is known at the War Office of the incident mentioned. The General Officer Commanding-in-Chief concerned has been called upon to report on the matter.

Indian Whipping Act.

SIR H. COTTON (Nottingham, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India, whether legislation to amend the Whipping Act in India is in contemplation; and, if so, whether he is in a position to state the nature of the Amendments proposed, and to lay Papers on the subject.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. MORLEY, Montrose Burghs): The Government of India have the question of amending the Whipping Act under consideration, and have consulted local Governments and other important authorities, and legislation for the purpose will be undertaken during the Calcutta session. I am not yet in a position to state the nature of the Amendments proposed, or to lay Papers on the Table.

SIR H. COTTON: Will the right hon. Gentleman lay Papers?

MR. MORLEY: I do not know about that, but I shall be willing to communicate to the House the new rules.

Whipping Sentences in India.

SIR H. COTTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that the record famine years in India of recent times, viz. 1878, 1897, and 1900, are also the years in which the greatest number of judicial sentences for whipping were inflicted, amounting to 75,223, 64,087, and 45,054 respectively; whether the marked increase of whipping during these years was due to the infliction of that punishment for petty cases of theft arising out of poverty and destitution; and whether, having regard to the fact that, in the present year, conditions of scarcity accompanied by much sickness have arisen, he will issue instructions to the Government of India which shall ensure that the example of previous famine years shall not be followed in the present year in respect of the infliction of whipping as a punishment for petty theft.

MR. MORLEY: I am aware that sentences of whipping have been more numerous, as theft has been more prevalent, in years of scarcity and distress; but at the same time I cannot doubt that due allowance is, and will be, made by magistrates for the effects of poverty and destitution, and I do not think it necessary to issue special instructions in the sense suggested in advance of the proposed amendment of the law as to whipping, which I have asked the Government of India to carry forward with all possible despatch.

*MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the issue of such instructions would not be a conspicuous example of interference of Executive with judicial functions, to which the Hindoo Congress so strongly and properly objects?

MR. MORLEY: I think it would.

Falkland Islands.

MR. WEDGWOOD (Newcastle-under-Lyme): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether he is aware that the public lands in the Falkland Islands are being sold off at the rate of about £50,000 a year; and whether he will consider the advisability of changing the method of sale into that of leasing at periodically revised rents.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): Under the provisions of the Land Ordinance, 1903, the holder of any country land is entitled to purchase the whole of his holding at any time not less than one year before the termination of his lease. Lessees have enjoyed the right to purchase for many years past, and it would not be possible to deprive them of it. The proceeds of the sale of land in the Falkland Islands are invested separately, and form a capital asset of the Colony. The average receipts of the Sale of Lands Fund amounted to about £5,000 a year for the five years 1902–1906, the highest amount in any one year being £12,783. The sum mentioned by my hon. friend is probably quoted from balance of land sales investments, which amounted on 31st December, 1906, to £50,180.

Unclaimed Balances.

MR. BOTTOMLEY (Hackney, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that a considerable amount of money is at present in the hands of the bankers of the United Kingdom in respect of dormant balances and obsolete accounts; and whether he will consider the desirableness of introducing legislation to compel the handing over of such sums to the Department of the Public Trustee.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.): There is, so far as I am aware, no evidence available as to the total amount of such unclaimed deposits, which may or may not be considerable; and, under the law as it at present stands, the State has no claim to them. I do not think there would be any advantage in transferring such funds from the custody of the persons at present accountable for them to that of the Public Trustee.

Children in Public-houses.

MR. WEDGWOOD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the recommendation of the Chief Constable of Liverpool, as to the prevention of children under fourteen from entering public-houses; and whether he will consult with the Board of Education as to the desirability of embodying some provision in the new Licensing Bill.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): I am not aware that the Chief Constable of Liverpool has formulated any such recommendation. It is not contained in the reports which he made to me and which I have laid before Parliament on the question of the frequenting of public-houses by women and children, and he tells me that he has written nothing else on the subject. I am, however, aware that the proposal indicated by my hon. friend has met with considerable support in the country, and I can assure him that the whole question is engaging the earnest attention of the Government with a view, as I stated on Monday, to legislation.

Metropolitan Police Pensions.

Mr. BOWERMAN (Deptford): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that on 1st January last, the time of the quarterly payment of Metropolitan Police pensioners was fixed to begin at 2.30 p.m., instead of 11 a.m., as formerly; that consequently the congestion was so great that men of very advanced years were compelled to stand about for hours, exposed to a biting north-easterly wind, before being able to enter the pension office at New Scotland Yard; and whether, inasmuch as it is impossible to pay such a large number of men in one afternoon without overcrowding and delay, thus inflicting unnecessary inconvenience, and even hardship, upon old servants of the public, he will give instructions for the time of payment to again begin at 11 a.m., on 1st April next, and on subsequent quarterly pay-days.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am afraid that the suggested alteration in the hours of payment cannot be made, as there are other pensioners to be paid in the morning; but steps will in future be taken to direct the pensioners to the waiting-room accommodation which is available for them at the Cannon Row Police Station. I may perhaps point out that the personal attendance of pensioners at New Scotland Yard is unnecessary, as a system is in force under which pensioners can be paid by means of post office orders.

Cannock Chase Collieries and the Workmen's Compensation Act.

Mr. ALBERT STANLEY (Staffordshire, N.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the schemes certified in certain collieries in the Cannock Chase district contracting the workmen out of the provisions of the Workmen's Compensation Act; whether he proposes to take any steps to ascertain whether these schemes furnish scales of benefit as favourable to the workmen as the provisions of the Act; is he also aware that in one case at least they have been made a condition of employment; and will he take such steps as will afford every person so desiring full liberty to withdraw from these schemes without interference from his employer.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I have communicated with the Registrar of Friendly Societies, who informs me that four schemes have been re-certified under Section 15 of the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1906, for employers in the Cannock Chase district; that in every case he, as Chief Registrar, has satisfied himself that the schemes provide benefits which are actuarially as favourable to the workmen as the provisions of the Act; that in no scheme has any clause making membership a condition of employment been inserted; and that every scheme contains a clause enabling any member to withdraw from the scheme as provided by the Act. As my hon. friend is aware, the actual administration of the provisions of the Act with regard to contracting-out schemes rests with the Registrar, and not with the Home Secretary. If it is true, however, as alleged in the letters my hon. friend has kindly submitted to me, that unfair pressure is being brought to bear on men by making membership of the scheme a condition of employment, that is clearly contrary to the intentions of Parliament, and I am bringing the letters to the notice of the Registrar.

Employment in Germany.

Earl WINTERTON (Sussex, Horsham): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade for what reason the figures relating to employment in Germany have been omitted from recent issues of the *Board of Trade Labour Gazette;* and whether he will give instructions for the figures of employment in different countries to be obtained in future.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Lloyd-George, Carnarvon Boroughs): Figures relating to employment in Germany are only published quarterly by the German Labour Department. The last figures available were included in the *Labour Gazette* for November last, and the next will be included in the February issue. Official statistics of employment in foreign countries are regularly published in the *Gazette* as soon as available. While they are useful for the purpose of tracing changes in employment within any particular country, they are entirely useless as a means of comparing the state of employment in different countries as the basis of the figures is quite different. A warning to this effect appears regularly in the *Labour Gazette*.

Australia and the Irish Trade Mark.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the Customs Department of the Commonwealth of Australia, in according preference under the new tariff, has prescribed that the importer may be called upon to produce to the proper officer of Customs such evidence as he may require of the origin of goods from the United Kingdom; whether, seeing that the stringent conditions under which the right to use the Irish trade mark is granted render its application to Irish goods an absolute guarantee of origin, he will represent to the Commonwealth Government the desirability of accepting the Irish trade mark as a proof of origin; and whether he will at the same time represent that such recognition will facilitate the separation, for statistical purposes, of Irish imports into Australia from those of other portions of the United Kingdom.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Full particulars of the present requirements of the Australian Customs Department with regard to the proof of origin of goods in order to enable them to benefit by the preferential tariff are given in the *Board of Trade Journal* for 30th January, a copy of which I have caused to be furnished to my hon. friend. My right hon. friend the Secretary of State for the Colonies has expressed his willingness to invite the Commonwealth Government to consider the suggestion that the Irish trade mark should be accepted as evidence of the origin of the goods which bear it. He will at the same time call their attention to the point raised in the last part of the Question.

Incorrigible Vagrants.

*MR. REES: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he proposes to introduce legislation dealing with the increasing number of vagrants who deliberately decline to work and are not proper subjects for support at the public expense.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): The subject is receiving the attention of the Government, but I cannot promise that they will propose legislation with regard to it during the present session.

Politics in the Post Office.

EARL WINTERTON: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General for what reason permission has been refused by his Department for the formation of a habitation of the Primrose League at the General Post Office.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): My predecessors, who were more intimately acquainted with the constitution and working of the Primrose League than I can profess to be, laid it down that the Primrose League being a political organisation identified with Party politics, Post Office servants ought not to hold office under the League. I have seen no reason to alter this decision.

MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware of the existence of a branch of the Pioneer Socialist League in the Central Telegraph Office; and whether it was organised and continues with his knowledge and sanction.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: My attention has recently been drawn to the existence in the Post Office of an association called the Pioneer Socialist League; but it was not organised with my knowledge or sanction. I believe it came into existence before I took office. As far as I am at present aware there is nothing in the programme of the League to connect it with Party politics. So long as that is so, I see no reason for taking action.

Earl WINTERTON: May I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman does not recognise the existence of the Independent Labour Party?

Mr. R. DUNCAN (Lanark, Govan): Is the right hon. Gentleman not aware that the Primrose League, while having a political basis, disclaims being a Party organisation?

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: I have no intimate knowledge, as I said, of the constitution or working of the Primrose League. I am basing my decision in regard to the matter entirely on that of a predecessor of mine who, belonging to the Unionist Party, no doubt had some knowledge of the constitution of the league.

Mr. R. DUNCAN: The league is not a Party organisation.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: I confess it would be very difficult to persuade me that it is not.

Earl WINTERTON: Do we understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that in his opinion while the Primrose League is a Party organisation the Pioneer Socialist League is not?

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: I have given my Answers. The noble Lord can judge.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): Does the right hon. Gentleman not admit that the mere name, "Pioneer Socialist League," coupled with recent election events, proves that this is a Party organisation?

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: I am speaking of the members of a particular league and its programme, so far as it has come to my knowledge. I have said there is nothing in that programme to connect it with Party politics, and so long as that is so I am not entitled to interfere.

Mr. LEVERTON HARRIS (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that there are branches of the Free Trade Union and Tariff Reform Leagues in the Post Office? Does he propose to interfere with them?

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: So far as my attention has been drawn to the matter, they have not committed any breach of the Post Office rules.

Wireless Telegraphy Convention.

Mr. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General, whether His Majesty's Government has yet ratified the International Wireless Telegraphy Convention; and, if not, what is the latest date to which the act of ratification can be postponed.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: The ratification of the Radio-telegraphic Convention by His Majesty's Government has not yet been deposited. In order that advantage may be taken of the provision as to the exemption of stations, it is necessary that the Convention should be ratified and notice given of the reservation of the right of exemption before the end of March.

Mr. ARTHUR LEE: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General, whether his attention has been called to the fact that the Foreign Relations Committee of the United States Senate has decided to take no action at present with regard to the International Wireless Telegraphy Convention, and that the ratification of this Convention by the United States is thereby postponed indefinitely; and will he undertake that the Convention will not be ratified by His Majesty's Government unless and until the simultaneous ratification by all the first-class Powers concerned is secured.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: I have seen certain statements in the Press as to the attitude of the Foreign Relations Committee of the United States Senate with reference to the Radio-telegraphic Convention; but I have no official information on the subject. But I do not see any reason why the decision of His Majesty's Government to ratify the Convention should be modified.

MR. ARTHUR LEE: Will the right hon. Gentleman take early steps to obtain official information which he can do from the British Ambassador in Washington with regard to the action of the Senate, and will he also bear in mind that the Report of the Committee, on which the Government is acting, made a specific recommendation that the ratification should not be made unless it was simultaneously signed by other Powers?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: The Committee suggested to the Foreign Office that there should be something more or less in the nature of simultaneous ratification by some of the Powers, but the United States Government was certainly not one of them, and as regards the question whether that Government ratify or not, I do not see how that would affect the attitude of His Majesty's Government.

*MR. REES: Will the matter come before this House again?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: No, Sir.

Allocation of School Building Grants.

LORD R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education how many applications he has received for grants towards the building of schools altogether; how many of these came from Wales, and how many from England; and how many have been granted in each case.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): It is impossible to distinguish between applications and the various forms of inquiry from managers, parents, and other persons with regard to these grants, which may or may not be considered as applications. But I hope to include in a statement which will be issued before the close of the financial year a list of definite applications, which have been made by local education authorities, showing the amount of the grant sanctioned, if any.

SIR GEORGE DOUGHTY (Great Grimsby): Will the Return show how many of these applications are for single area schools?

MR. MCKENNA said the Return would show to which particular district in each case the grant was made.

SIR GEORGE DOUGHTY: Will an inquiry be held in the case of each application?

MR. MCKENNA: If the local authority is to contribute part of the cost and has to raise a loan there will no doubt be an inquiry by the Local Government Board, but not otherwise.

SIR GEORGE DOUGHTY: Then in the other cases will there be no inquiry at all?

MR. MCKENNA: I do not know if the hon. Gentleman has read the regulations under which the allocation has to be made.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): Is there any objection to our knowing now what allocations have been made?

MR. MCKENNA: Yes, there would be considerable difficulty, because we are still considering the applications from day to day. I cannot, in fact, say that any have been granted.

MR. BOWLES (Lambeth, Norwood): Can the right hon. Gentleman say none have been granted?

MR. MCKENNA: No, the negotiations are going on and it would be undesirable to say what allocations have been made until they are completed, which will not be very long.

Newton Abbot Disturbances.

EARL WINTERTON: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General whether the Public Prosecutor proposes to take any action in the matter of the recent riot and destruction to property at Newton Abbot.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir W ROBSON, South Shields): This matter is entirely one for the local police. Since the noble Lord put his Question down they have taken what, I believe, to be adequate action.

Gooseberry Mildew.

MR. BECK (Cambridgeshire, Wisbech): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he will inform the House as to the approximate or exact acreage of diseased gooseberry plantations the bushes of which were required under the Gooseberry Mildew Order of July last to be destroyed, and as to the acreage of bushes actually destroyed under that Order; and whether the hon. Member will issue a Return showing the acreage of diseased gooseberry plantations the bushes of which are now required under the second Gooseberry Mildew Order of last December to be either destroyed or merely pruned.

THE TREASURER OF THE HOUSEHOLD (Sir EDWARD STRACHEY, Somersetshire, S.): We will endeavour to collect the information for which my hon. friend asks and to give publicity to it in some convenient form.

The Irish Exporters' Directory.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland) whether, in view of the efforts being made throughout Ireland to develop local manufactures and industries and to open up direct trade relations with foreign countries, he will now consider the advisability of publishing an Irish exporters' directory, in which the fullest information shall be given in French, German, Spanish, and English; if so, will he endeavour to secure an extensive circulation of the publication in foreign countries and the Colonies, not merely through the usual official channels, but especially amongst the inhabitants of Irish birth or descent in those countries who have evinced their desire to co-operate with the Irish people in opening up or extending direct trade relations; and whether, in view of the fact that at least two foreign countries, namely, France and Belgium, now publish statistics of their direct trade with Ireland, he will facilitate the accurate collection of such statistics by calling attention, in the proposed publication, to the use by the exporters of the Irish trade mark, whereby an absolute guarantee of origin is given.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR IRELAND (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): The Department have already had this matter under consideration, and they are of opinion that it is very desirable to publish a directory of the kind referred to. They are taking steps to ascertain how the project may most usefully be carried out, and in this connection they will fully consider the suggestions contained in the latter part of the Question.

Athenry Agricultural Station.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture for Ireland whether he will state the circumstances under which malicious damage was done to property of the department near Athenry; what was the nature of the damage; what amount was awarded for compensation; whether the compensation has been paid; and whether any persons were punished for this offence.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: In the autumn of 1907 the Department decided to put into complete habitable condition Newfort House, situated on part of the Agricultural Station at Athenry, which up to 1906 had been occupied by a herd. A tender was accepted from a local builder, who undertook to do the necessary work for about £50, and on the 2nd October, 1907, the builder in question brought into this house a quantity of timber which he intended using in effecting the necessary repairs. At a late hour on the same night the house was found to be on fire; the buildings were completely burned out, only the walls being left standing. As the herd above referred to had practically to be evicted by the Department, and as the Department's meadows containing over forty acres had been spiked about a month previous, and the house of a labourer fired into, while before the completion of the harvest a dispute as to labourers' wages arose, there were substantial grounds for regarding the burning as malicious, and a claim was accordingly made for compensation. The case was heard at Galway Quarter Sessions early last November, and was resisted by the county council, who, however, did not contest the question of malice. The Recorder gave a decree for £470 with costs, to be levied off the town of Athenry. This sum has not been paid to the Department, as the council have appealed against the award on the question of value. This appeal will be heard next month. No person was punished for the malicious burning, as adequate evidence was not forthcoming.

Agrarian Outrages in Ireland.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): On behalf of the hon. Member for East Down, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many agrarian outrages have been reported to the police in Ireland during 1907; in how many cases were arrests effected; in how many cases were convictions obtained; and in how many cases were the police overpowered.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): The number of agrarian offences reported in the year 1907 was 372, which includes 182 threatening letters or notices. In forty-two cases, offenders were arrested or summoned; in five of these convictions were obtained, and in twelve the proceedings are pending.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: Can the right hon. Gentleman give any reason for the small number of evictions as compared with the number of cases brought into Court?

MR. BIRRELL: I must have notice of that.

SIR F. BANBURY (City of London): The right hon. Gentleman has not answered the last paragraph of the Question.

MR. BIRRELL: I have not the particulars here.

Irish Industrial Schools.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: On behalf of the hon. Member for East Down, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the average annual cost per head of maintaining an inmate in St. Conleth's Industrial School is £23 1s. 9d., St. Kelvin's, £22 16s. 2d., High Park, Dublin, £22 19s. 9d., St. Joseph's, Limerick, £22 9s. 2d., and Malone, Belfast, £16 8s. 7d.; whether he can explain how it costs £7 per annum more to maintain an inmate in King's County than in Belfast; and can he state which, if any, of the industrial schools named have their accounts audited prior to receiving public grants for their maintenance.

MR. BIRRELL: The schools referred to are reformatory, not industrial, schools. I am informed by the inspector that the cost of maintenance at the various schools is correctly stated in the Question. The Government grant is at the fixed rate of 6s. a week for each juvenile offender detained in a reformatory school, and the Government, therefore, are not concerned with the actual cost to the management.

Cattle Drives in Ireland.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: On behalf of the hon. Member for East Down, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many cattle-driving outrages were reported to the police in Ireland during the past thirteen months; how many arrests were made; and how many convictions obtained against the perpetrators.

MR. BIRRELL: During the thirteen months ending 31st January, 415 cases of cattle-driving were reported. Proceedings by arrest or otherwise were taken against 574 persons. Of these five were convicted, and 290 were ordered to find bail to keep the peace.

Firearm Outrages in Ireland.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: On behalf of the hon. Member for East Down, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many outrages have been reported to the police in Ireland during 1907 in which firearms and explosives were used; in how many cases were convictions against the offenders obtained; and in how many cases were the police overpowered.

Mr. BIRRELL: During the year 1907, 121 cases of serious crime occurred in Ireland in which firearms or explosives were used. In twelve of these cases there were convictions, and in seven of the cases the proceedings are still pending. In none of the cases were the police overpowered. In one case the police who were present were not in sufficient numbers to make arrests, but they identified several of the offenders and these were subsequently prosecuted.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG: May I ask if in view of that fact that a very large number of these cases occurred immediately after the revocation of the Peace Preservation Act, the right hon. Gentleman will consider the desirability of re-introducing the Act?

Mr. BIRRELL: Having regard to the evidence of the utility of the former Act I have no intention of proposing its restoration to the Statute-book.

Mr. CULLINAN (Tipperary, S.): In how many cases have the police reason to believe that the outrages were committed by the owner of the property or those associated with him.

Mr. BIRRELL: I cannot answer that Question. I do not think I have any such information in my possession.

Police Protection in Ireland.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG: On behalf of the hon. Member for East Down, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many persons are at present under police protection in Ireland, and how many police are engaged in the duty.

Mr. BIRRELL: On 31st January, fifty-four persons were receiving constant protection and 151 police were employed in affording that protection. On the same date 216 persons were receiving protection by occasional patrols, but it is not possible to say how many police were engaged in affording patrol protection, seeing that men are not specially detached for that duty.

Boycotting in Ireland.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG: On behalf of the hon. Member for East Down, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many cases of boycotting and intimidation were brought to the notice of the police in Ireland during the past thirteen months; how many arrests were made; and how many convictions obtained against the perpetrators.

Mr. BIRRELL: During the past thirteen months, the number of cases of serious boycotting reported in Ireland was fifteen, the number on 1st January, 1908, being nine. The number of cases of minor boycotting on 1st January was 116. The number for the entire period would be somewhat larger, but the precise figures have not been tabulated. The number of cases of intimidation reported during the period mentioned was 333, inclusive of 295 threatening letters or notices. Seven persons were arrested and one was summoned. Two of these persons were convicted, and in one case the proceedings are pending.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG: Will the right hon. Gentleman inform us how the police distinguish between serious and minor cases of boycotting?

Mr. BIRRELL: That must be left to the discretion of the police, having regard to the circumstances of each case. They draw the line as best they can.

United Irish League and West Meath Graziers.

Mr. STAVELEY-HILL (Kingswinford, Staffordshire): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, on 20th October, three graziers in West Meath were requested by the local branch of the United Irish League to give up their grass lands; whether Mr. Casey's cattle were driven on the 22nd; and whether His Majesty's Government propose to take any action to prevent the interference by menace of the United Irish League with the grazing trade of Ireland.

Mr. BIRRELL: On 20th October a deputation consisting of about ten men called on three graziers in the locality of Reynella and requested them to surrender their grazing farms for division amongst small holders of land. On 22nd October, cattle belonging to these graziers, who included Mr. Casey, were driven off the farms. The police arrested seven of the offenders on the spot and they were subsequently committed to prison for two months in default of giving bail for their future good behaviour.

Consumption in Ireland.

MR. A. ROCHE (Cork): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the unanimous expression of public opinion all over Ireland during the past six months on the urgent necessity of taking steps to check the ravages of consumption in Ireland, any action will be taken this session to amend the law in conformity with the views expressed at the meetings.

MR. BIRRELL: It is intended to introduce a Bill on the subject of consumption in Ireland. The Bill, which has already been drafted, is entitled "The Tuberculosis Prevention (Ireland) Bill, 1908." I hope it will pass into law during the present session.

Improvements at Cooscroum, Co. Kerry.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, can he state what steps, if any, have been taken by the Congested Districts Board to carry out the required improvements in the fishing cove of Cooscroum, county Kerry, to which his attention has frequently been called, and as to which valuable evidence was given before the Congested Districts Commission last summer.

MR. BIRRELL: The Congested Districts Board hope to be able to improve the landing-place at Cooscroum in the course of the year 1909, if funds should be available.

MR. BOLAND: Is the right hon. Gentleman prepared to have these works carried out?

MR. BIRRELL: I am not quite sure, but the whole matter is undergoing careful investigation.

Portlester Cattle Drive.

SIR F. BANBURY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on 15th September the stock belonging to Mr. Carttry, at Portlester, county Meath, were driven away; and whether any arrests have been made.

MR. BIRRELL: The Question appears to refer to a case which occurred on 14th September last where cattle belonging to Mr. Patrick Canty were driven off a farm at Portanob, county Meath. No arrests were made.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether this stock was driven to the London Stock Exchange and watered there?

Cattle-Drive in County Longford.

SIR F. BANBURY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on 15th September, forty men raided Mr. Percival's ranch in county Longford and drove off sixty-four head of cattle; whether any arrests have been made; and whether he will state how many policemen were on the scene at the time.

MR. BIRRELL: It was reported to the police that on 15th September forty-nine head of cattle were driven off Mr. Percival's grazing farm by two or three men. No arrests were made. No policemen were on the scene at the time.

Leitrim (Galway) Outrage.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on the night of 21st January, the houses of two farmers named respectively Fahy and Mealia, at Leitrim, near Loughrea, in County Galway, were fired into; whether the police have made any arrests in connection with the matter; and what steps are being taken to prevent outrages of this nature which have become so common in this part of the country.

Mr. BIRRELL: The houses of the men named in the Question were fired into on the night of 22nd January. The shots were heard by a police patrol which had been at the place a quarter of an hour earlier. The police, however, were unable to make any arrests. A large extra force is serving in the district of Loughrea, and all possible measures are being taken for the preservation of the peace and the detection of offenders.

De Vesci Estate, Queen's County.

Mr. MEEHAN (Queen's County, Leix): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware if there are 500 acres of untenanted land suitable for tillage purposes on the De Vesci estate, Queen's County, that there are on this estate twenty evicted tenants, that evicted tenants have repeatedly applied for reinstatement or equivalent holdings, and that in the months of November and December last, permanent tenancies were created on those 500 acres of untenanted land with the object of defeating the intentions of the Evicted Tenants Act, and preventing the reinstatement of those evicted tenants; and whether he will issue instructions to the Estates Commissioners to apply the compulsory powers under the Evicted Tenants Act, and acquire the land for allotment amongst the evicted tenants.

Mr. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners have made inquiries with reference to the untenanted lands on the estate of Lord De Vesci, which are stated to be suitable for the restoration of evicted tenants. Eighteen applications for reinstatement have been received from evicted tenants on this property, and of these ten have been noted as suitable to receive land. The Commissioners have been informed that several tenancies have recently been created in these particular lands. The Commissioners are considering what may be done in the matter generally.

Mr. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): Will steps be taken to prevent these bogus tenancies being created?

Mr. BIRRELL: It is a matter on which the Estates Commissioners will be consulted.

Sir Antony Macdonnell.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG: On behalf of the hon. Member for East Down, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether Sir Antony Macdonnell has tendered his resignation to the Lord-Lieutenant or Irish Government; and whether it has been accepted.

Mr. BIRRELL: No, Sir.

The Crown Jewels Commission.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG: On behalf of the hon. Member for East Down, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the recent Commission appointed to inquire into the loss of the Crown and other jewels from Dublin Castle, had no power to compel the attendance of witnesses or to administer the oath to such witnesses as voluntarily appeared before it; and whether he will ask Parliament to appoint a Commission with full powers to inquire into the disappearance of the jewels and other matters closely connected therewith.

Mr. BIRRELL: The Answer to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative, and to the second part in the negative.

Ballinglera (Leitrim) Evicted Farms.

Mr. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the terms upon which the bailiff Brady surrendered the evicted farms at Ballinglera, county Leitrim, to the Estates Commissioners; whether he is aware that this man has been rigorously boycotted for years, and all attempts to punish persons who have molested him and his family have failed through the disagreement of juries; whether the former tenants on the lands surrendered have been reinstated and assisted out of public funds; and whether he is aware that the United Irish League have determined to continue the boycott upon Brady so long as he remains in the country.

Mr. BIRRELL: Thomas Brady has voluntarily sold his interest in the evicted farms referred to in consideration of the sum of £300 paid to him by the Estates Commissioners. The former tenants, four in number, have been reinstated by the Commissioners who have sanctioned grants to them, amounting in all to £140, to enable them to work the farms. I have ascertained from the police authorities that Brady was boycotted for upwards of a year, and that prosecutions against persons for molesting him have failed. The police have no information to the effect stated in the concluding part of the Question.

The Attack on Mr. White Blake, J.P.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, what steps have been taken to discover the men who fired at and wounded Mr. White-Blake, J.P., and his mother, as they were returning from mass on Sunday, 17th November last; and with what result.

MR. BIRRELL: The police authorities inform me that every effort has been made to discover the offenders in this case, but sufficient evidence to justify an arrest has not yet been obtained.

SIR F. BANBURY: Is it not the fact that a considerable number of persons saw the outrage committed?

MR. BIRRELL: Mr. White-Blake was under police protection at the time. Two policemen were behind him and two others were within call when the shots were fired from the plantation, but I am sorry to say they entirely failed to see the people, if there were more than one, by whom the shots were fired.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): Did not Mr. White-Blake complain that instead of endeavouring to secure the arrest of the offenders some people who heard the shots cheered?

MR. BIRRELL: I cannot charge my memory with the exact facts, but I know enough to satisfy me that the outrage did not receive that reprobation which I should have hoped it would.

Lord Ashtown's Gamekeeper.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether his attention was directed to the circumstances attending the imprisonment of two gamekeepers in the employ of Lord Ashtown by order of a majority of magistrates at Ballymacarberry; and whether he will state upon what grounds the release of these men was ordered after one day's imprisonment.

MR. BIRRELL: The two men in question were released from prison by order of the Lords Justices acting for the Lord-Lieutenant. It would be quite contrary to practice and irregular to state the reasons which influence the exercise of the Lord-Lieutenant's prerogative in such cases.

MR. POWER (Waterford, E.): Can the right hon. Gentleman say on whose report the Lords Justices acted?

MR. BIRRELL: I cannot, but I have no doubt they received legal advice before they took the action they did.

Irish Magistrates.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will give the names of the magistrates in Ireland who refused to convict people of offences clearly brought against them; and whether he has taken any steps to deal with this matter.

MR. BIRRELL: The Government have no power to interfere with magistrates in the exercise of their judicial discretion.

Mr. E. T. McDermott, J.P.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the evidence of Mr. E. T. McDermott, J.P., at Castlerea quarter sessions on 8th January, that in consequence of his refusal to attend the Ballintubber petty sessions and adjudicate on a case of cattle-driving in favour of the accused, when requested to do so by a deputation of the Ballintubber branch of the United Irish League, he was prevented from getting turf in Ballintubber, and a neighbour's cattle were driven on to his lands; and whether any persons have been prosecuted for thus attempting to intimidate a magistrate.

MR. BIRRELL: The attention of the executive Government was called to Mr. McDermott's evidence which was to the effect stated by the hon. Member. The question of instituting a prosecution was carefully considered, but it was found that there was not sufficient evidence to justify proceedings in the case.

Waterford Guardians and Mr. Scully, C.E.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Waterford Board of Guardians have dismissed from their service Mr. Thomas Scully, C.E., for having given professional evidence at Waterford quarter sessions in connection with a claim for damages resulting from the explosion at Glenaheiry Lodge; and whether the Local Government Board have acquiesced in this action of the guardians.

MR. BIRRELL: The Local Government Board have made inquiry on the subject of this question, and have been informed by the Clerk of the Waterford Union that the Board of Guardians have not dismissed Mr. Scully from their service.

Belfast Gas Works.

MR. J. DEVLIN (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the fact that since the Belfast Corporation took over the local gasworks in 1874, a sum of £155,400 has been banded over out of the profits in aid of local rates, that the cost of gas is only 2s. 3d. per 1,000 feet, and that the profits for the year ending March, 1907, were £70,000; and whether, in view of the success of municipal ownership of the gas supply in Belfast, he will direct the Local Government Board to circularise Irish urban authorities pointing out the advantages of such ownership.

MR. BIRRELL: The Local Government Board have not sufficient information at their disposal to verify the figures given in the Question. Assuming, however, that the facts are substantially as stated by the hon. Member, the Board do not consider it desirable that they should act upon the suggestion contained in the concluding part of the Question. The steps which may be taken for the lighting of urban districts is a matter for the consideration of the urban authorities themselves, who will doubtless learn from the publicity given to the hon. Member's Question, that the municipal gas undertaking has proved successful in Belfast.

Doorus Shooting Outrage.

LORD J. JOICEY-CECIL (Lincolnshire, Stamford): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the shooting of Mr. Ryan at Doorus, in East Clare, on Thursday, 23rd January; and whether any arrests have been made in connection with this outrage.

MR. BIRRELL: I refer to my Answer to a similar Question put by the hon. Member for Mid Armagh on Monday last.

Use of Firearms in County Clare.

LORD J. JOICEY-CECIL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the statement of County Court Judge Bodkin at Ennis, in County Clare, that the county was now in a peaceful condition; whether he can state how many outrages by firearms have been perpetrated in that county since 31st January, 1907; and how many people in the county are now receiving protection by the police, either constant or by patrols.

MR. BIRRELL: According to a newspaper report to which my attention has been called, Judge Bodkin's remarks appear to have had special reference to the division of Ennis, at the Quarter Sessions for which he was presiding. There was only one case for trial on the occasion, a case of larceny. Since 31st January, 1907, twenty-four offences in which firearms were used have been reported from County Clare. On 31st of last month four persons were receiving constant protection and fifty-four protection by patrols.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): May I ask whether it is not a fact that in a great many of these so-called outrages by firearms no injury whatever was inflicted and that there is a vast amount of exaggeration in connection with them?

Mr. BIRRELL: I am glad to know that it is the fact that only a small amount of personal injury has been inflicted; but I think the hon. Member will agree with me that there is rather too free a use of firearms in the County of Clare.

Home Rule.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I beg to ask the Prime Minister if he proposes to afford time for the discussion of the Resolution of which I have given notice on the subject of Home Rule for Ireland.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs): The Government are prepared to give a day for the discussion of the Motion of the hon. and learned Member, and I think Monday, 17th February, will probably be a convenient day, as far as the Government are concerned. It will be one day.

The Government and the Lords.

Sir F. BANBURY: I beg to ask the Prime Minister when he proposes to introduce the Bill dealing with the House of Lords.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No doubt that is a subject which is constantly in the mind of the Government, and it will be introduced at a convenient time.

NEW BILLS.

VALUATION (IRELAND) BILL.

"To effect an equitable administration of any general Valuation in Ireland," presented by Mr. James O'Connor; supported by Mr. Devlin, Mr. O'Doherty, and Mr. Ffrench; to be read a second time upon Friday, 27th March, and to be printed. [Bill 44.]

WASTE LANDS (IRELAND) IMPROVEMENT BILL.

"To enable county councils in Ireland to acquire and improve and sell or let Waste Land; and for other purposes," presented by Dr. Ambrose; supported by Mr. Gwynn, Mr. William Redmond, Mr. Meagher, Mr. Lundon, Mr. MacNeill, Mr. Crean, Mr. John Roche, Mr. Duffy, Mr. Jeremiah MacVeagh, Mr. O'Malley, and Mr. McHugh; to be read a second time upon Friday, 24th April, and to be printed. [Bill 45.]

FOREIGN TRAWLERS REGULATION BILL.

"To provide for the better prevention of fishing by Foreign Trawl Vessels within areas closed to British Trawl Vessels," presented by Mr. Williamson; supported by Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. McCrae, Mr. Watson Rutherford, Mr. Dalziel, Mr. Eugene Wason, Major Anstruther-Gray, Sir Thomas Glen-Coats, Mr. Crombie, Mr. Owen Philipps, Mr. Cathcart Wason, and Captain Waring; to be read a second time upon Friday, 10th April, and to be printed. [Bill 46.]

LAW OF DISTRESS AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Law as regards a landlord's right of Distress for Rent," presented by Mr. Arnold Herbert; supported by Mr. Beale, Mr. Lehmann, Mr. Micklem, Mr. Napier, Mr. John Ward, and Mr. Walker; to be read a second time upon Friday, 14th February, and to be printed. [Bill 47.]

ENGINES AND BOILERS (PERSONS IN CHARGE) BILL.

"To grant certificates to Persons in Charge of Engines and Boilers in and about mines," presented by Mr. William Edwin Harvey; supported by Mr. John Wilson, Mr. John Johnson, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Enoch Edwards, Sir Alfred Jacoby, Mr. Joseph Walton, Mr. Walsh, Sir Joseph Compton Rickett, Mr. Hall, and Sir Thomas Roe; to be read a second time upon Friday, 14th February, and to be printed. [Bill 48.]

CIVIL BILL COURTS (DUBLIN) BILL.

"To improve the procedure and make better provision for the discharge of the business of the Civil Bill Courts of the city and county of Dublin," presented by Mr. John Gordon; supported by Mr. Nannetti, Mr. Harrington, Mr. Field and Mr. Waldron; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th March, and to be printed. [Bill 49.]

BALLOT ACT (1872) AMENDMENT (NO. 2) BILL.

"To amend the Ballot Act, 1872, and to provide for the taking of a second ballot at Parliamentary and other elections," presented by Mr. Edward Dunn; supported by Mr. Higham, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Rowlands, Mr. Glendinning, Mr. Nicholls, and Mr. Richardson; to be read a second time upon Friday, 3rd April, and to be printed. [Bill 50.]

POLLING ARRANGEMENTS (PARLIAMENTARY BOROUGHS) BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to the Arrangement of Polling Districts in Parliamentary Boroughs," presented by Mr. Guinness; supported by Mr. Arthur Allen and Mr. Leverton Harris; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 51.]

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [29th January], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Lehmann.*)

Question again proposed.

Mr. J. M. MACDONALD (Falkirk Burghs)—in whose name was an Amendment to the Address to add the following: "But while rejoicing that your Majesty's relations with Foreign Powers continue to be friendly, we humbly express our regret that there is no indication of any intention to reduce expenditure on armaments" said he understood that if he did not move that Amendment the Government would give a day for the discussion of a Resolution in terms similar to those of the Amendment before any Vote was taken. If that was so, he would most gladly accept the offer of the Government. Perhaps the Prime Minister would let them know whether or not the Government did propose to give that day.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman): I think that the course suggested by my hon. friend is that which would be the most convenient, not only to the Government, but to the House, and to the interest of the cause in which my hon. friend is acting. The House is not at this present moment in possession of information as to the policy of the Government in this matter, and until the Estimates for the year are on the Table it will not possess that information. I undertake that a day will be given for the discussion of this important matter, not only before any Vote is taken, but before the Speaker leaves the Chair on the Army and Navy Estimates. The House will then be in a better position to judge of each Vote, whether the Votes are to be increased or decreased, and what the reasons for those increases and decreases are, and therefore it will be much better qualified to enter on the discussion then.

Mr. LEVERTON HARRIS (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) asked if the Prime Minister could give a day for the discussion of the Amendment to this Amendment with regard to the immunity of shipping at sea from capture.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: was understood to reply that if that Amendment was in order, no doubt it would be possible to discuss it.

Mr. J. M. MACDONALD intimated that he was extremely grateful to the Prime Minister for the offer which he had made, in view of which he would not move his Amendment.

Lord R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.) said he desired to add at the end of the Address the words: "But humbly expresses their regret that the recent action of the Board of Education has not been in accordance with the traditional principles of administration in this country." He said—I do not desire to conceal from the House or to avoid the responsibility which necessarily attaches to a Motion of this kind, which is unquestionably a Motion of a serious character. It undoubtedly amounts to a charge that the present Chief of the Education Department has not held the scales evenly between those who are dependent upon the administration of the Department over which he rules. Of course, that is a serious charge, to support which the House will naturally expect that I should give some cogent reasons before they accept the Amendment. Our complaint against the administration of the Board of Education undoubtedly embraces several quite separate departments of its activity. We complain of its ordinary administration from day to day, of its dealing with the training colleges and secondary schools, and also of its procedure with regard to the building grant of £100,000. I do not propose, nor do I think it necessary, to weary the House with any large number of cases; I do not think that that will conduce to the understanding of the points that I desire to put before the House; but there are one or two cases under each of those heads to which it will be necessary for me to draw attention. Let me take, first of all, the question of the ordinary administration of the Board of Education. There are two parts of the island in which undoubtedly the administration of the Board of Education is fraught with very considerable difficulty. One is Wales, and the other is the West Riding of Yorkshire. We feel that in both these cases, where we have the local education authority strongly and intolerably hostile to certain types of public elementary schools under their control, it is a matter of the utmost importance and of very considerable difficulty that the Board of Education should be absolutely impartial between all schools of all kinds, and should not strain and exercise its powers unfairly in favour of or against one particular type of school rather than another. Until the right hon. Gentleman assumed the office which he now holds, I do not think there was any ground for saying that the Parliamentary chiefs of the Department had acted otherwise than fairly as between the different classes of schools, but I will leave the House to judge whether that can now be said, in view of the facts that I am about to put before it. I will first take the case of Swansea. The Swansea schools and the Swansea local education authority have had a stormy history during the last two or three years. Over and over again, I think it amounted to more than a dozen times, the local education authority has made demands upon the managers of those schools or has resisted legitimate demands made by the managers, and the matter has been referred to the Board of Education. I believe I am right in saying that in every case, until the right hon. Gentleman occupied his present position, the Board of Education felt bound to decide against the local education authority. We sometimes hear of the tyranny which is exercised by the Church of England in rural areas over the children, but we may claim that over the greater part of England we have the adherents of the Church of England in a great majority on the local education authorities, and I do not believe we would find a single instance in the whole of England where the local education authority, so composed, has ever even been accused of unjust treatment of a school, undenominational or nonconformist, within its jurisdiction. And when we hear accusations made by hon. Gentlemen on the opposite benches of the injustice exercised by the Church of England, we are entitled to reply that the local education authorities who have even been accused and convicted of injustice are those in which nonconformists hold a majority. That is the history of the Swansea disputes in outline, until the right hon. Gentleman became President of the Board of Education. After that, at any rate, the managers of the schools felt that a very different spirit pervaded the Education Department. I will give two instances only of the kind of thing of which they, not unjustly, complained. The local education authority have always and consistently declined to pay in the Church of England schools, or in the Roman Catholic schools, salaries equivalent to those paid in the council schools, and as long ago as 31st July, 1906, during the time of the right hon. Gentleman's predecessor, this official note was sent to the local education authority—

> "The Board of Education are not aware of any circumstances which would justify a differentiation in the salary paid to the teachers in voluntary and council schools. They feel that the present state of things is unjust to the teacher and is gravely imperilling the efficiency of the school."

Yet the salaries are still in the same position as they were when the present Chief Secretary for Ireland described them as unjust to the teacher, and gravely imperilling the efficiency of the school, What has happened since then? It can only be described—and I do not wish to use unnecessarily exaggerated terms—as a history of chicanery of a kind that would be a disgrace to a County Court. Every kind of miserable technicality has been raised by the local education authority, who have not been ashamed to raise pleas which no self-respecting solicitor in a County Court would look at for a moment. First came a statement that they could not pay the salaries unless there was a written agreement; that was used in order to postpone a decision. The matter was referred to the law officers, and for months was considered by the Board of Education, who at last said they thought that technically a written agreement was necessary. Then the managers went to the local education authority and asked what salaries they were to insert in the agreement, but the local authority declined to give any reply at all. On being pressed they said the managers must put in the same salaries as were being paid before. They recommended the managers to do that which the precedessor of the right hon. Gentleman had already described as utterly improper and utterly against the efficiency of the schools. The managers did not do anything of the kind, and thereupon a fresh point was taken up by the board, who said they ought to have inserted those salaries, because the local authority had given them guidance as to what salaries they were prepared to pay, and that the board could not do anything until that difficulty as to whether there was guidance or not had been disposed of. So it went on—perpetual delays, the flimsiest technicalities raised by the local authority not in opposition to the Board of Education, but, on the contrary, with the support and countenance of the right hon. Gentleman. There is another topic. In August last year this local education authority, admittedly without the slightest legal justification, suddenly passed a resolution that unless certain alterations, not to the building but to the playground, over which they had no kind of control, were carried out they would cease to maintain the school. The resolution was absolutely illegal, and was admitted so to be even by the authority itself. None the less, they acted upon it, and from August onward till quite recently they declined all maintenance. The teachers had to be paid, and the managers had to pay them in August, September, and October, and in October they went to the Education Department and said they could not always go on paying that which it was clearly the duty of the local education authority to pay. "Give us," they said, "some assurance that we shall be repaid by those who are legally bound to pay these debts, and we will go on, otherwise we cannot." The Board of Education utterly declined to give any such declaration, and the result was that in November and December those unhappy teachers did not get any payment at all. But for the fact that Parliament was going to meet, it would have gone on for months and months, but when the coming of Parliament cast its shadow before, a very different spirit seemed to come over the Board of Education and the local education authority, and after these intolerable delays the salaries were paid by the local education authority and, I believe, even the arrears of salaries from August last. But for five months the Board of Education submitted to this gross and palpable infringement of the law, for which there is not a shadow of excuse, because the right hon. Gentleman had ample powers to enforce the law, but it did not suit the present administration to quarrel with a local education authority on which there was a Radical majority. What was the alleged answer to that? I understand the answer was that they could only enforce the clear duty of the authority by recourse to the Defaulting Authorities Act. It may be, for aught one knows, one of the principles of the Liberal Party—and they are a very surprising set of principles—not to enforce the Local Authorities Default Act, just as we were told not very long ago that it was one of their principles not to enforce the Crimes Act. What is wrong with the Local Authorities Default Act? I know perfectly well that that Act was opposed keenly by the right hon. Gentleman and his Party when in Opposition. But in itself and in its terms is there anything remarkable or exceptional in its provisions? Similar or even more stringent powers appear in other Acts of Parliament. It simply says that in certain circumstances when the local education authority fails to do its duty the Board of Education may supersede the local education authority and appoint another body to do it. In the Public Health Act there is power given to the central authority to carry out the duty of the local authority when they neglect it. And even as late as 1906 under the present Government an Act was passed affecting labourers in Ireland in which precisely the same power is given to the central authority to discharge the duty if the local authority declines to do it. But it seems that it is in accordance with Liberal principles to apply this power in all other cases, but not to this particular school authority which happens to be in the unfortunate position of not being acceptable to the President of the Board of Education. I pass to the well-known case of the Garforth School in the West Riding of Yorkshire. Let me say what the dispute there was. The local education authority expressed its desire to turn a mixed school, with all the departments in it, into a school which should be an infant school only, dealing with children of the tenderest ages. The matter came before the Board of Education because the managers said, very rightly, that that would, in fact, entirely destroy the character of their schools, and as they desired to have the control of the education of these children up to the end of their school life it was quite plain if they stopped their religious education at nine or ten years of age, they would be shifted over to another kind of religious education to which the managers strongly objected. Accordingly when the local education authority applied in April of last year to the Board of Education they received the reply that no adequate reason appeared for the reorganisation of the school. The West Riding Education Authority holds very strong opinions and is exceedingly persistent, and they made a second application on 15th June, and on the 20th of that month they received a reply similar to the first. It was quite plain that if the local authority merely relied on the justice of their case they had very little hope of persuading the Board of Education to pass from what they had already decided. I do not know what they meant by their second statement, but they took steps to bring this matter before the personal attention of the President of the Board of Education. I do not know what particular form of pressure they brought to bear on the President of the Board of Education.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. McKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): There was none.

LORD R. CECIL: The President of the Board of Education says there was none. Then the President of the Board of Education did an injustice without even the excuse of pressure. Accordingly, on 12th July, a letter was sent to the local education authority without any pressure by the President of the Board of Education and of his own accord, stating that the right hon. Gentleman had reconsidered the matter, and that the two previous decisions of the Board were reversed. The local education authority were therefore allowed to have their own way. The managers, however, were not content, and brought the matter before a Court of Law. It would be impertinent in me to make a criticism of the decision of the very learned Judge who tried the case, but this I will say, that he is second to none in his acquaintance with this particular department of law. I observe that the learned Judge quite rightly attributes the letter of 12th July to the President of the Board of Education's own initiative. What does the judgment amount to? It is that the action of the President of the Board of Education was clearly and obviously illegal, that it was the duty of the local education authority to maintain this scheme as it had always existed, and that that was governed by a decision of the House of Lords. The only doubt the learned Judge had at all was whether he had jurisdiction to compel the Board of Education to observe the law. That is really what the judgment comes to. I am not exaggerating in the slightest degree when I say that it is not a desirable state of things when the chief of a Government Department should make a kind of decision which a Court of law has to upset. That is all I would say as to the Board of Education under its present chief. I come to the question of the training colleges and secondary schools. I do not desire to go back on all that was said last session in regard to this subject, but the broad complaint was made, and quite justly, that the Regulations affecting the training colleges and secondary schools were expressly and designedly framed so as to hinder so far as it was possible the denominational training in these colleges. I ask even the hon. Member for the Louth Division of Lincolnshire—who takes the strongest possible nonconformist view on this question, is it not desirable so long as you have the present system of education—a system in which you have a large proportion (nearly one half) of the children trained in denominational schools—that there should be the fullest possible opportunity for giving religious training to the teachers who are to teach these children? I quite understand the view of those who think that all the schools in the country should be undenominational, although it seems to me to be a bigoted and intolerant view; but until you have all the schools made undenominational, I cannot understand what possible excuse there is for hampering in any way those who want this religious teaching. Is it not your clear duty as long as denominational schools exist to see that the teachers are properly trained and instructed in the religious teaching which they are bound afterwards to impart? I think that those who take this broad view of the case will admit that the regulations issued last year are absolutely indefensible. I do not propose to deal with the details of those regulations, or to point out to the House at length how it is that they must necessarily hamper the training of the teachers in these colleges. But I desire to say one word in regard to an incidental aspect of the question. It has been pointed out that in many of these colleges it would be impossible for the managers or trustees to comply with these regulations under their trust deeds. And what is the reply of the President of the Board of Education? "Oh, it is quite easy. Let them apply to me and I will allow them to dispense with all the obligations under their trust deeds." What does that invitation amount to? I saw one of the trustees of a training college the other day—a distinguished Evangelical clergyman—who informed me that "he valued the religious teaching in these colleges above everything; but he was told by the President of the Board of Education that he was to set aside his highest conscientious feelings and ask to be relieved from the trust which he regarded with the utmost tenderness. Surely no one should ask him to do so base an act as that. He did not see how the President of the Board of Education should ask a man with strong religious convictions to be relieved from the conscientious discharge of his duties." The President of the Education Department has to act in a two-fold capacity. The President acts in his ordinary administrative capacity, and in the second place he has been entrusted with the discharge of the judicial procedure formerly exercised by the Charity Commissioners; and it is only in the exercise of that latter jurisdiction that he can deal with the trust deeds at all. What is that jurisdiction? It is the jurisdiction of the Court of Chancery, which passed to the Charity Commissioners when these were originally appointed. It was that jurisdiction and no other which was transferred to the Education Department. What would be thought of a Chancery Judge—and that is the way to test the matter—if he had said: "I understand that your trust deed prevents you from carrying out certain regulations. Come to me and I will relieve you of your obligation without hearing the opponents of that procedure, or their arguments"? What would be thought of a Chancery Judge who said that? I pass from that question; but there is one other matter which I regard as very important in connection with the recent action of the Education Department, and that is with reference to the grant of £100,000 for school buildings. Let me remind the House what is the history of that grant. Without any warning, about this time last year the Government came down with a Supplementary Estimate or Vote on Account for a grant of £100,000 for school buildings. It was then pointed out that in Section 96 of the Act of 1870 there was an express provision forbidding the application of Parliamentary grants to the building of schools. They treated that at first with some lightness, but afterwards admitted that it was a serious point, and then their answer was this: "Oh, well, we will put it all right by merely putting in the Appropriation Act a provision to repeal the section, and in that way we shall get rid of the statutory prohibition of Parliamentary grants." The first point I desire to call the attention of the House to is this: That the effect of that was very, very seriously to diminish the Parliamentary control over that £100,000. It is said by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, "Oh, no, we made regulations, these regulations were submitted to the House, and the House had complete control over them, so that if they disliked any of the terms and conditions on which this grant was made, they could have expressed that dislike." When were these regulations laid on the Table of the House? They were laid in the middle of August, long after the Estimates had been passed, and there was no opportunity of discussing the details, or the nature of them, except on the Second Reading of the Appropriation Bill. They could not be discussed in Committee because that has been held to be out of order, and the only control which this House had over those regulations was to reject the Appropriation Act for that year. The thing is absolutely illusory; there was no control whatever. The matter certainly appears to me to be quite clearly a very objectionable procedure, but unfortunately, I find that this matter has been carefully looked into recently, and it is one which is not destitute of authority in this respect. It seems that early in 1883, or 1882 the Government of the day, also a Liberal Government, proposed to do something of the same kind. There was an Act limiting the amount to be paid to resident magistrates to a certain sum; the Government desired to make some changes in the position of those officials and to pay a larger salary than they were allowed to do by that statute, and then they sought to set it right in exactly the same way by means of the Appropriation Act. The matter was repeatedly considered by the Comptroller and Auditor-General, by the Public Accounts Committee, and by the Treasury, and from the first time that it was brought to their attention, they pressed the Government not to persevere in this course, and, I am bound to say that the successive Governments always recognised that it was an improper course and a Bill was introduced forthwith to set the matter right. Before I come to the action of the Government, I should like to read what the Committee of Public Accounts said. They reported more than once, but I will take the case of 1885 where I find a very strong expression of opinion. This is what they say—

> "Your Committee cannot accept the view in the legal, still less in the financial sense, that the distinct terms of an Act of Parliament may be properly over-ridden by a Supplementary Estimate supported by the Appropriation Act. Your Committee trust that this matter which is one of great importance from a constitutional point of view, will, in the next Parliament, be very carefully examined and re-considered by the Public Accounts Committee."

That Report went, as it always does, to the Treasury, who minuted as follows—

> "My Lords concur in the opinion of the Committee as to the danger, both on financial and constitutional grounds of any general adoption of the view that the distinct terms of an Act of Parliament may be over-ridden by a subsequent Vote supported by the Appropriation Act. In the case of the salaries of the resident magistrates, the irregularity has been the result of failure to obtain in time the sanction of Parliament to a Bill, which had been introduced to legalise the increased salaries in question, rather than of a deliberate intention to over-ride a Statute in the manner described."

And they went further. They directed a communication to be made to the Chief Secretary for Ireland on the subject. It runs—

> "Sir, I am directed to transmit to you herewith copy of Paragraphs 41 and 42 of the Second Report of the Public Accounts Committee of 1885. I am to request that you will call the attention of his Excellency the Lord-Lieutenant to the gravity of the irregularity, both from a financial and a constitutional point of view, which has been allowed to exist for three successive years. My Lords are aware that attempts have been made to legalise the additional salaries of the resident magistrates by a clause inserted in a Bill which, through stress of circumstances, has failed to pass into law. They trust that steps will be taken to remove the irregularity, otherwise my Lords fear that it will be necessary to reduce the salaries within the limits sanctioned by law."

Successive Governments did their best over and over again to get a Bill through Parliament legalising the matter. It was brought before Parliament and they, after considering the question, accepted it. It is true that the Bill never actually received the Royal Assent, but Parliament considered the matter and accepted it. Successive Governments have admitted that this was a most improper and most unconstitutional Measure.

MR. McKENNA: No, no.

LORD R. CECIL: They have done so over and over again, both in evidence before the Public Accounts Committee and in debate.

MR. McKENNA: The noble Lord can find nothing in the statements made to justify that.

LORD R. CECIL: I did not say this Government.

MR. McKENNA: Or any Government.

LORD R. CECIL: They have done so, but they continued to pay the salaries until the Treasury said they could no longer pay them. They continued to do it until they found another way of doing it without infringing the Act of Parliament. But this great Government which went up and down the country saying that they were coming into power to restore the financial control of Parliament—and no one said that more loudly and aggressively than the Secretary to the Treasury—are going to weaken it. Of course if this procedure is endorsed by us the control of Parliament will become a farce. I do not trouble very much about the practical inconvenience of the course adopted, although it has been inconvenient. The Government have created this fund and have not in fact by legislation dealt with the various legislative difficulties which interfere with proper administration. I need merely refer to Section 18 of the Act of 1902, which requires that a proportionate part of the capital expenditure shall be charged upon the localities themselves—from a half to three-quarters. This sum can only be paid to the local education authority and to nobody else, and therefore you assist by this fund the rich central body—the county body—and you can give no assistance whatever to the poor local body—the parochial authority, which has still to find from one-half to three-quarters of the cost of any school erected in its locality. That is an inconvenience due to the hurry with which this transaction was carried out, and, it shows the extreme undesirability of this course of procedure; but that objection is not of the same weight as that to which I have already alluded. Why do the Government adopt this extraordinary course? There is only one answer. They adopt it in order to avoid discussion. Oh, I know they say—"We are very clever; we are going to get round the House of Lords by this little dodge, and in this way we shall prevent the House of Lords interfering." It is very, very clever indeed, extremely clever, but the real body which is injured is the House of Commons. That is the peculiarity of all the devices of the present Government which are levelled against the House of Lords: they always affect the House of Commons. The real truth is that it is not the House of Lords of whom they are afraid. A Bill to grant £100,000 to school authorities could not have been amended but only rejected by the House of Lords, and I do not think that they would have rejected it. What the Government did fear was that Members of this House would require that this grant should be passed on business lines and not on unfair lines, so that it might not be used to help one school at the expense of another. As to the actual administration of the grant, I can only say that the information which comes to me shows that it has been deformed by the same animus which we think we perceive in the other administrative acts of the Education Department. I admit—because we have been refused information—that we cannot say how this grant has been administered. We asked on Monday and we asked to-day, and on each occasions the Minister, exercising his undoubted privilege, has declined to give us any information at all. The reason given is such as at least to strengthen our objection. The right hon. Gentleman says that he cannot tell what applications have been granted and what have not, because the matter is perpetually coming before the Board of Education, so that from minute to minute, from hour to hour, and from day to day, he does not know whether he has signed a particular grant. That may be true, but it throws an extraordinary light on the administration of a Department of the Government of this country. We have, however, given to us a long list of schools to which a grant has been made where there has been no real genuine demand for it whatever and no real independent public inquiry. We are also told that grants have been made out of all proportion to the population in the counties of Monmouth and Denbigh. It is a curious thing, and I should think it is capable of some very simple kind of explanation, but this is what is said in Wales: Monmouthshire is represented by the President of the Board of Education, and Denbighshire is where the Welsh Education Secretary had a long public and private career, and it is said that one of the benefactions has been made in the parish in which the Welsh Secretary lived, and for all I know, lives to-day. These are facts in regard to the administration of the Board of Education which seems to me to be of a very unfortunate character, and I do not think the House will wonder that people are beginning to inquire what is the real reason for what they regard as inexplicable except on the ground of prejudice or partisanship on the part of the Board of Education. I should not be doing my duty if I did not say that the feeling in Wales is that it is all due to the Welsh Secretary. It is recalled that he was the election agent of one of the junior members of the present Ministry; that he was a well-known and vigorous opponent of voluntary schools in his own district, and that he actively participated in what is known as the Welsh revolt. All these things are recalled. I desire to make no charge against him—I daresay that Mr. Davies has done his best in difficult circumstances, but I do say that the appointment of Mr. Davies was a grossly improper appointment. I say that to select a man for the administration of Welsh education, whatever his merits may be, who has such a record as that is to put him in a position the duties of which he cannot possibly fulfil satisfactory. I am, however, under no restraint in pointing out that the great difficulty which the President of the Board of Education is in arises from his own previous history. We all know the part the right hon. Gentleman took in what is known as the Welsh revolt. We know that he, in conjunction with the President of the Board of Trade, advocated throughout Wales resistance, evasion, and even breach of the law of this country. There are, no doubt, advantages in making a gamekeeper of a poacher; but there is this disadvantage, that he is under the influence of the blackmail of his former associates. We know something of the way in which this question has been treated by these two right hon. Gentlemen. That was shown the other day when the Government was justified for not proceeding with the Welsh Disestablishment Bill by the fact that the Education Act of 1902 was a great disestablishment Bill for Wales. That measure which was really a great measure for the education of this country was defended in Wales as a measure of disestablishment. I venture to submit that the facts that I have stated to the House are of a very serious character indeed. If this spirit is to be imported into the administration of public affairs, if they are not to be administered for the benefit of the whole community but for the advantage of one section and the disadvantage of another, it will destroy the confidence of the people of this country in the administration of public affairs. That would be a very serious loss indeed. It means not only a general atmosphere of distrust but also that you will not get people to co-operate in Public Departments—to give their money, their time and their assistance to Public Departments. And not even the right hon. Gentleman doubts that if he loses the co-operation, the money, and the assistance of the people of this country the administration of that Department cannot be a success. I beg to move.

*SIR PHILIP MAGNUS (London University): In rising to second the Amendment moved by my noble friend, it is not my intention to traverse the ground which has been so fully covered by him. The recent action of the Board of Education which this Amendment states is contrary to "the traditional principles of administration of this country" refers to several points. Many of those bearing upon internal administration the mover of this Amendment has spoken to. But in addition to those there is the important question which occupied some portion of the speech of the noble Lord as to the grant of £100,000 for the building of new elementary schools and the manner in which the administration of that grant by the right hon. Gentleman compares with traditional practice in this country. Besides that, there are the regulations for training colleges, to which reference will be made by subsequent speakers. Then there is the important question of the regulations for secondary schools, to which I propose to devote the greater part of the few remarks I shall make in seconding this Amendment. Let me recall to the House very briefly the circumstances under which these regulations for secondary schools were brought before the country. It was, if I remember rightly, on the evening of 15th May last year on the Motion of the hon. Member for one of the divisions of Somerset with regard to the further encouragement of secondary education that the President of the Board of Education, taking part unexpectedly in the discussion, referred to some of the regulations under which the new grants for secondary schools were to be given. No opportunity occurred at the time for any full discussion of the subject. I personally said a few words before the President of the Board of Education spoke and before I had any notion what these regulations were likely to be. The hon. Baronet the Member for the Oxford University who followed the President of the Board had not the details of these regulations before him to enable him to criticise them as he would otherwise have been able to do. Before these regulations were issued no other information as to their contents was given to the people. Towards the end of July they were issued, and became almost immediately operative. The effect of these regulations was very considerable. They altered, and introduced fundamental changes in all our secondary schools, not only in the curricula, but also in the relation of elementary to secondary education, in the constitution of the governing bodies of the schools, and in the conditions under which religious education might be given in those schools. These changes had reference not only to matters of education, but also to important matters of administration. Many of the regulations were wholly inconsistent with the trust deeds under which the schools were administered. They became operative, as I have said, almost immediately after they were published, and the consequence of that action of the Board of Education was that no opportunity was offered to the local authority which administered secondary education, to the governing bodies of the schools which had the education under their immediate control or even to associations of teachers to discuss some of the important questions to which they referred. In fact the regulations were thrust upon us so unexpectedly just before the recess that the governing bodies of the schools knew not how to deal with them. As a fact, the President of the Board came into our schools with a sword in one hand and a bribe in the other, and said the bribe would be given if we accepted the regulations; otherwise, our trust deeds might be destroyed and the school might cease to exist. This is a very serious matter in regard to the administration of education. It is a serious matter that governing bodies have not had an opportunity for expressing either approval or disapproval of these regulations. Many governing bodies who disapprove of them were compelled to accept of them in consequence of what might happen if they did not. I am prepared to admit that in many respects these regulations will prove of great advantage to some of our secondary schools. I am prepared to admit that many schools will receive increased grants under conditions to which they are quite willing to agree. But at the same time there are other schools which these regulations must affect most disadvantageously, schools which will be reduced in *status* by the necessity of accepting the conditions which are imposed. As to one of these regulations I should like to say a word to show how unfairly it acts and the difficulties in which the managers of schools are placed by having it so unexpectedly cast upon them. I refer to Article 44, which states that no grants hereafter are payable under the provision of Articles 42 and 43 in respect of schools not on the grant list for 1906–07. By this regulation no secondary school that does not happen to be on the grant list for that year, and no new secondary school, will ever be able to obtain the higher grants paid under this regulation, notwithstanding the fact that the school may be educationally efficient, or that the local educational authority may decide under Article 43 that the school is absolutely essential for the educational work of the district. Such schools are once and for ever removed from the possibility of receiving grants of the higher grade. There are other regulations of which we may reasonably complain. What we most complain of, however, is the procedure adopted by the Board of Education and the manner in which the regulations have been carried out. It has been said that no departure has been made from traditional practice in the conditions under which the grants are offered, nor in the fact that changes have been introduced by means of regulations. We shall be told that it is quite in accordance with the uniform practice that a change in the conditions under which grants are made to schools should be by means of regulations rather than by Act of Parliament. To a great extent that is true. I should like to point out, however, some essential differences between the action of the President of the Board of Education in this case and the traditions which have been observed previously by the Board. These differences are very important. In the first place, these regulations refer to secondary and not to elementary schools. It is only within the last few years that secondary education has come under the immediate control of the Board of Education, and we must always remember the fact that head masters and assistant masters, and head mistresses and assistant mistresses, of secondary schools are persons of considerable educational qualifications, who certainly have a right to be consulted before drastic changes are introduced into the conditions under which grants to secondary schools are made. In such cases it is most desirable that the Board should proceed with caution, and should not make any changes until an opportunity has been afforded to educational societies in this country of expressing an opinion upon the character of the changes proposed to be introduced. But even as regards changes of a purely educational character, the Board has departed from its traditional practice, for I think I am right in saying that the Elementary Education Code has always been laid on the Table of the House one month before it came into operation, whereas these regulations were published and came into force within a few days of their publication. Therefore, the custom that prevailed with respect to educational changes in elementary schools has not been observed on this occasion in regard to the more important regulations which have been issued in connection with secondary schools. There is another point. These regulations refer to highly controversial matters—matters altogether outside ordinary educational questions. They refer to the constitution of the governing body, and to the conditions under which religious teaching may be given in our schools. Such matters, in the case of elementary education, have never been introduced, and I think cannot be introduced, without distinct legislative action. During the year 1906 we were occupied for several months in this House discussing changes in connection with our public elementary schools not altogether different in character from those proposed to be introduced into the secondary schools by means of regulations. I cannot see any reason whatever why the President of the Board of Education should even take the trouble to bring in a new Bill dealing with the alterations which he is desirous of introducing into our elementary schools if such amendments can be made by means of administrative regulations only. I think, from the little I have said as regards these regulations, that I have made out a case which justifies the terms of the Amendment with respect to the action of the Board of Education. I venture to think that this protest is necessary, and will be found advantageous even by the Board of Education, for I find that the whole country is becoming more and more alarmed at the growing power of the Board, and the arbitrary and despotic exercise of such power. In all educational circles nothing is more feared and dreaded than a State-directed system of secondary education. If for one moment it is thought that the President of the Board of Education will use the powers which he possesses—powers, I venture to think, greater than are possessed by the head of any other of our administrative offices—if even he is suspected of using his powers for purely political ends and purposes, then a very great blow will be given to the education of this country, and the popularity of the Board of Education will tend to diminish. I think we should all regard this as a matter of great regret, and I venture to hope that in the future every opportunity will be given for full discussion of changes such as those proposed to be introduced in our training colleges and secondary schools. I trust the House will agree with me in thinking that the action of the Board of Education, as indicated by the noble Lord who moved this Amendment, and in connection with the regulations for secondary schools, has been such as to justify our asserting that it is a departure from the traditions of the Board.

Amendment proposed—

"To the end of the Question to add the words 'But humbly express our regret that the recent action of the Board of Education has not been in accordance with the traditional principles of administration in this country.'"—(*Lord Robert Cecil.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

*Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.) said it would have been better if this discussion had been delayed or postponed until the House was in possession of fuller and completer information in regard to the many points brought before them. He thought it would have been better if the discussion had taken place on the Education Estimates. He could not help deploring the fact that it was necessary to enter upon a debate of this kind on an Amendment to the Address, thus bringing the question of education and the method of it into the arena of Party politics. Everyone who had the slightest knowledge of the difficulty of carrying on the work of education in this country through the Board of Education, knew the disadvantages connected with a debate of this kind across the floor of the House. Everyone really interested in education did his utmost to bring about an atmosphere in which some practical solution of this great controversy would be possible. It was unfortunate that a sourse of discord should be thrown into the solution by the intervention of a debate of this kind. He could not help regretting, also, some phrases used by the noble Lord opposite. In the early part of his speech he spoke of the bitter hostility of the local education authorities in Wales and in the West Riding of Yorkshire to a particular kind of school. If the noble Lord had had practical experience of the working of those local authorities in England and Wales, he did not think he would have made that statement on the floor of the House. Anyone who had had the privilege, as he had, of being a member of one of those local authorities, knew their earnest desire—he cared nothing about their political complexion—to do their utmost in all circumstances for education. He denied the truth of the statement that local education authorities, about which he knew something, had been actuated throughout by bitter hostility to one particular type of school. He thought that if all the facts and all the conditions surrounding the situation were known to the House, they would not be found to substantiate a statement of that kind. Then the noble Lord had remarked of one local authority in Wales that its conduct was "chicanery unworthy of any county court." Remarks of that kind were not likely to assist the cause of education, and made it very difficult for them to believe that the noble Lord and those who acted with him in this matter were guided by anything beyond sectarian motives. With reference to the allocation of the grant of £100,000 to the various districts, he desired to say that in Denbighshire applications had been made only after the fullest consideration. He was very sorry to hear the noble Lord giving expression to a statement that a discreditable motive had affected the amount of the grant to Denbighshire. He desired most strongly to repudiate the suggestion that it was possible for an official of the Board of Education to have been influenced to the extent of a farthing by such a motive as had been suggested by the noble Lord. He regretted that gentlemen on the other side of the House in these debates on education should impute personal motives to prominent officials of the Board of Education. The sooner the better he thought that kind of argument vanished from the floor of the House of Commons. He had only further to add that with regard to applications made for grants from the £100,000 Parliamentary grant, there had been little, if any, serious opposition to the demands which had been made, and it was also a significant fact that in two instances Churchmen had offered to give the site upon which the new schools were intended to be erected, in one case as a free gift, in the other practically so; while in another case a Churchman had sold the land for a nominal sum. Under the circumstances he did not think that the charge that had been suggested as to feeling in Denbighshire with regard to these grants was justified. He did not desire further to take up the time of the House, but he hoped the day was not far distant when a debate of this character would be impossible.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.) said he could quite appreciate the objection taken by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Denbigh to an education debate on an Amendment to the Address, but he thought they must recognise as sensible men that during the last few years Amendments to the Address had been generally on topics which were being discussed in the country, and whether the subject was controversial or not. The debate of the last two days was on one of the most controversial points probably that could be brought forward. It might be more useful that the Chief Secretary should have been attacked actually on his Estimates, and possibly had the President of the Board of Education had his Education Estimates coming on next week the debate might have been referred to them. But when an important subject like education, on which the country felt very much, might be diverted for weeks and weeks, it was only right that the Opposition should take the opportunity afforded by the Address for raising the question. As regarded the actual points of discussion, the President of the Board of Education could be under no misapprehension whatever as to the opinions held by Irish Members, both as regarded the administrative action of the Board of Education and especially as regarded the issue of regulations dealing with training colleges and secondary schools. Their position was put perfectly clearly last July when the regulations were issued, and if there had been any doubt in his mind on the point he was sure that what had happened during the recess in all parts of England where there were great centres of Catholic population left no doubt whatever on his mind as to the position they took up. He merely desired to call attention to an administrative account of the Board of Education dealing with a Catholic secondary school, which emphasised what perhaps no amount of general discussion could emphasise—the unfortunate action taken by the Board. He was sorry that the debate had come on so unexpectedly or he would have sent word to the President of the Board of Education as to the actual school topics he was going to deal with, but doubtless the right hon. Gentleman was quite familiar with them. A secondary school carried on at Southampton very soon after the regulations of the secondary schools had been issued called a meeting of its managers. The school had been recognised for the past three years; there was no question whatever of its being an unrecognised school. The meeting was held by the governors; the local education committee was informed that the school desired to be kept on and to qualify for the grants in the usual way. The local education committee approved of this by a majority of twenty-two to five, and in accordance with precedent sent their resolution to the local education authority, the Borough Council of Southampton, who approved of the action of the local education committee by twenty-seven votes to seven, and in the ordinary way a requisition was sent up to the Board of Education. The Board of Education in its reply wrote that they were not prepared to waive Articles 5, 23 and 24 of the regulations of the secondary schools, on the ground that they were not satisfied that a Roman Catholic school was at present regarded as part of the secondary school provision for the area. He had briefly given the facts to lay the ground for his argument, the main point of which was that since the Liberal Government came into power and since the Education Bills had been introduced, the cry had always been:" Trust the local education authority." Here was a case in which not merely a local education committee, but the local education authority, acting on the suggestion of the local education committee, by the large majority of twenty-seven to seven, affirmed the decision. The Board of Education waived that aside and said it would not comply with the request that the secondary school should be maintained on the full grant list. The important point which he wished to direct the attention of the House to, and it was a matter which was bound to come up again on the Education Estimates, was that these grants were governed by Section 43 of the regulation. Section 43 said that if, as regarded the conditions set up in Clauses 5, 18, 23 and 24, but not with regard to Clause 20 of the regulations, the local education authority passed a resolution informing the Board of Education that the school was in their view required as part of the secondary school provision for their area, and that one or more of these conditions might be waived with advantage in view of the educational needs of the area, the Board of Education might if they saw fit pay the grants in full under Articles 36 and 41 of that chapter. All the required conditions he submitted were carried out by this particular school when they asked to have three sections waived. Their application was backed up by the local education committee. It was backed up by the local education authority and the necessary conditions had been complied with by the school. Twenty-five per cent. of free places, without tests under Article 20, and a conscience clause for boarders under Article 18—all these conditions had been complied with, and he absolutely failed to see on what ground the Board of Education could now override the decision of the local education authority that this school was required for the district and was entitled to receive the full grant. The Board of Education now simply set aside the wants of the district, and of Catholic secondary school education, upset the local education committee, and the local education authority, and simply by a stroke of the pen decided that this school was not to be entitled to a full grant. He did not wish to go further into the subject. He submitted that a case of this sort must be dealt with fairly; but if the Minister for Education was entitled to override local education authorities he submitted that all the promises of the last two years in which it was said, " Trust the local education authority and you will see justice done," were of no value whatever.

MR. McKENNA: The charge brought against me by the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone is that I have not held the scales evenly, and he elaborated this charge under three heads. I shall take the opportunity of replying briefly to each point, but I can assure the House that it will not take me a very long time. The first complaint was of the day to day administration of the Board of

Education, and he illustrated this administration by taking two cases, first, the case of Swansea in Wales, and, secondly, the case of Garforth in the West Riding. With regard to the case of Swansea the noble Lord appears to have been completely misinformed. He charges me with not holding the scales evenly, or, to use the exact language of the Amendment—

> "Humbly expresses their regret that the recent action of the Board of Education has not been in accordance with the traditional principles of administration in this country."

It so happens that what I have done in Swansea has been in exact continuance of the action of my predecessor in office, the hon. Baronet who sits opposite. The difficulty in regard to the Swansea buildings has been going on since the year 1904. The managers of the school and the local education authority have never been able to agree. That disagreement went on during the whole time my predecessor was in office. I am thankful to say that last December an agreement ultimately was come to between the managers and the local authority as regards the buildings. That agreement was not produced, as the noble Lord seems to think, by the action of the Board of Education in anticipation of the meeting of Parliament. On the contrary, that agreement was produced, not with reference to the meeting of Parliament at all, but as the result of pressure which the Board was able to put partly upon the managers and partly upon the local education authority to obtain the best possible school for the children under the circumstances. Let me quote from a newspaper in South Wales which is not favourable to the present Board. The *Western Mail* says of the settlement of December—

> "The plans, as now agreed to, form a very satisfactory settlement as far as the managers are concerned."

The same newspaper in a note says—

> "Mr. McKenna has actually summed up enough courage to say 'No' to Mr. Richard Martin. Will it last?"

That was the view of this settlement which was made last December, and it is absurd to suggest that I have not held the scales evenly between the two parties when my opponents congratulate me upon having been firm against my friends. The noble Lord's next point was that I have refused to insist upon equal salaries being paid to teachers in the council schools and in the voluntary schools. There, again, I have only done exactly what my predecessor did, and there has been no change in the practice of the Education Board. The Act has been construed to mean that the Board of Education have no authority to compel equal salaries to be paid in all schools, and acting upon that construction of the law, my predecessor never insisted upon the same salaries being paid in voluntary schools as were paid in council schools. The salaries now being paid are precisely those which were paid under the former administration, and I am only following the precedent which has been set. The noble Lord states that Nonconformist authorities are unjust and put pressure upon voluntary schools in Wales. He was good enough to attribute a good deal of importance to what had been said by the President of the Board of Trade and myself with regard to the action by these local authorities. But the noble Lord misapprehends the situation in Wales. In Wales you have a population overwhelmingly Nonconformist in character. You had an Act of Parliament passed in the year 1902 which insists that the children of Nonconformist parents should be sent to Church schools in which there was a Church atmosphere, and that the parents should be called upon to maintain those denominational schools and the maintenance of the very Church atmosphere to which they objected. The local education authorities in Wales resolved not to contribute to the rates for the maintenance of those schools, and a great many of them have not contributed to those rates up to the present hour. The effect has been not, as the noble Lord suggests, to impose any special injustice upon these schools, for I am bound to say that their efficiency at present is at least as good as it was before the Act of 1902. The local authorities therefore in construing the Act in the light of the practice, not of the present Board of Education, but of the Board of Education of a Conservative Administration, are amply justified in saying that they are carrying out the law in maintaining these schools.

I deplore the Act of 1902, and I admit that the efficiency is not as high as I should wish to see it, but I am not responsible for that. That efficiency is, however, at least as high as it was under the hon. Baronet opposite, and to charge me with having changed the policy of the Board and departed from its principle is absolutely without a shadow of foundation. Hon. Gentlemen opposite may not like my policy or my regulations, but they cannot bring any substantial test of administration by the Board in which it can be alleged that the Board have acted in a partisan manner or departed from the settled practice of the Board. So much for the Swansea case. Now with regard to the Garforth case. What ground has the noble Lord for suggesting that there was any pressure in regard to the decision which the Court have now held that the action of the local authority was *ultra vires* ? A judgment on legal technical questions of this sort is a very difficult matter for any Government Department, and all we can do is to get the best legal advice open to us. If we are mistaken upon a matter of law no blame can be attached to the motives of the Government, and all that can be said is that we must take the construction of the law as laid down. Now what was the principle underlying the decision in the Garforth case ? The local education authorities are generally responsible for the provision of the educational supply over the whole area. There happens to be in Garforth a council school specially provided and specially built for the other children. A certain number had to be turned out of the Garforth Church of England school because it was overcrowded, and there was in the neighbourhood a school adapted to receive the older children, but not the younger. What more reasonable decision could a local authority come to in the interests of secular education and the ratepayers than that the children to be turned out of the overcrowded schools should be those children for whom provision had already been made in a neighbouring school building ? Whatever the law may have been, I submit that it is absolutely unfair to charge me with having given a partisan decision. With regard to training colleges the noble Lord maintains that our regulations are hampering the work of denominational colleges. He did not touch upon the merits of the regulations, and I do not propose to touch upon them either; but what he said was that in telling the trustees of these colleges that they can apply to the Board of Education for leave to vary their trust deeds in order to admit students under a conscience clause, the Board of Education had committed a gross breach of duty. On the moral ground whether trust deeds should or should not be varied the Chancellor of the Exchequer has given a most conclusive answer, in which he showed that they had again and again been varied by the action of Parliament, and even by hon. and right hon. Gentleman opposite; so that on the moral ground it cannot be denied that trust deeds are open to be varied. I have already said that if the trustees wish to get the benefit of public money they must comply with the conditions under which public money can be obtained. I have said to them: "I have statutory powers to come to your help, I am willing to help you to alter your trust deeds so as to admit of your receiving public money under the only condition under which public money can be paid." Wherein have the Board of Education committed a crime in doing that ? I have put no duty upon the trustees to have their trust deeds altered. If they do not wish to alter them they can still carry on their colleges, but without the assistance of public money. All I have said is that if they take public money they must conform to public conditions. The noble Lord quoted the case of a churchman who expressed to him his horror at being asked for a variation of his trust. This is a matter upon which the authorities of the training colleges must make up their minds. Let me put the case very simply. If the present trustees of training colleges like to confine themselves to their own trusts and the property they have got under them, they would probably be able to train in denominational training colleges just about one-fifth of the teachers who are now trained. They could have one-fifth Church of England students under strict tests of entry and trained in a strictly Church of England atmosphere, but they must cut down their number to one-fifth; if they want the other four-fifths admitted they can only do it with public money and they will have to admit students who may not necessarily be members of the Church of England. The Government are willing to offer large public grants under these regulations. They offer them to training colleges which will still maintain the whole of their present religious character, and the whole of the teaching staff may continue to be Church of England. The ordinary training of the college will be Church of England, and you will be able to carry on these Church of England colleges exactly as you carry them on now, with this difference only, that the large number of additional students who are paid for out of public money may be drawn, not only from members of the Church of England, but also from the members of any other religious community. I would call the attention of hon. Gentlemen to this fact. I know of no denominational institution in this country, entrance into which is only possible by the payment of a fee, in which any person who pays that fee is not allowed to go in under a conscience clause. All our great public schools, all our denominational colleges will admit anybody of any faith provided the parents will pay the fees. They have never found that these schools have had their family life broken into or their religious character disestablished because persons of all creeds have been admitted to their training. In the case of the Universities, where exactly the same quarrel went on for a long period of time, we have never found where the parents have to pay that any harm has in fact occurred to the religious character of of the institution because of the existence of a conscience clause, and I venture to say that when the trustees and managers of these colleges finally realise that these regulations have got to be complied with or else they will not be able to receive public money, when they have made up their minds to accept the necessary changes, they will ultimately find that their fears as to the collapse of the colleges, and as to their failure to achieve their original purpose, are as unfounded as have proved to be the fears in the case of the public universities.

Then the noble Lord went on to deal with the point that the Board of Education were exercising the jurisdiction of the Charity Commissioners. He said the Charity Commissioners had only the jurisdiction that was handed over to them from the Court of Chancery, and that, therefore, the Board of Education were bound to act as the Court of Chancery. He went on to say that no Court of Chancery would have declared its intention in advance in regard to the altering of trust deeds. We know that the noble Lord's history in this case is entirely at fault. He has been misled by a false analogy. It is quite true that the Board of Education have taken over the functions of the Charity Commissioners; it is quite true that the Charity Commissioners had taken over the functions of the Court of Chancery. But the functions then exercised by the Court of Chancery were administrative functions, and they were handed over just as the administrative functions in lunacy of the Court of Chancery were handed over to the Lunacy Commissioners. That did not constitute those Commissioners a judicial body. Not at all. They are an administrative body. The functions handed over now to the Board of Education are administrative functions which the Board of Education administer, it is true in a judicial spirit, but they are of a kind which have no relation whatever to the duties ordinarily exercised by the Court of Chancery. The last point which the noble Lord made was with regard to the £100,000 building grant. He said that the only control by Parliament over the grant was by the rejection of the Appropriation Act on the Second Reading. When I remember that that building grant was discussed three or four times in this House and that the regulations were issued in ample time to be brought to the notice of the House of Commons—[AN HON. MEMBER: "On 13th August."]—before the Second Reading of the Appropriation Act, and certainly before the Third Reading of that Act, and that as a matter of fact these regulations did not give rise to any complaint; when I remember further that what is really at issue between hon. Gentlemen opposite and myself in this matter is not this or that regulation dealing with the distribution of the grant, but the principle of the grant itself, and that that principle was debated and approved by the House of Commons more than once; then I am justified in saying that the charge brought against the Board on this ground fails in the same degree as the other one. We all know that, technically speaking, the only chance the House of Commons has of disapproving of a very large portion of the Estimates is by throwing out the Appropriation Bill on the Second Reading. A very large proportion of the Estimates are voted at the end of the session under the closure and never discussed at all. But there is an obvious answer that can be made. These Estimates are published to the House, and Members of the House by private negotiations between the officials of either Party have an opportunity of raising a particular topic in which they may be interested. It is quite true that the Appropriation Act itself does not give a very free and complete debate, but the Estimates in Committee do give that opportunity and this grant was raised specifically in the debate on the Estimates.

MR. BOWLES (Lambeth, Norwood); The right hon. Gentleman forgets, I think, that the opportunity to which he refers was taken at a time when we had not the regulations before us, and when therefore it was impossible for the House to know what was the real meaning and intention of the grant.

MR. McKENNA: I have a copy of the regulations here. It will be observed that the noble Lord in raising the point did not refer to a single regulation to which he objected. There was not a single objection raised to the regulations on the Appropriation Act. The regulations were in the hands of members, and not a single question was raised upon them. It is a mere afterthought at this time of day to raise a debate on the regulations when, as everybody knows, the real issue between us was whether this money should be spent under the authority of the Appropriation Act or could only be spent under the authority of a Bill which would have had to have the consent of the other House of Parliament. and would have been liable to amendment. That is the real reason, and it is mere hair-splitting to get up a case now upon the date on which the regulations were issued. The noble Lord said it was open to the Board to allocate this money as they please, and he was good enough in the course of his speech to refer to Monmouthshire and Denbighshire. I regret to say that I am unable to give the House the facts in regard to these two counties. But I can say in regard to the part of Monmouthshire which I represent that not one half-penny of this money has been allocated or applied for. I anticipate that the northern counties in Wales will receive a far larger proportion of this money than any other county. [Laughter]. The hon. Member opposite laughs. It is for the very purpose of meeting such cases as exist throughout Wales that the grant is made; it was for the purpose of dealing with parishes in which the overwhelming mass of the people are of one faith and the school is of another faith. Therefore, it will necessarily turn out that a larger proportion of the money has been spent in Wales. I am sorry that the noble Lord is not in his place now.

MR. BRIDGEMAN (Shropshire, Oswestry) said the noble Lord had been called away on a matter of urgency.

MR. McKENNA: Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will communicate to him the facts. Then the noble Lord, I think, exceeded perhaps the ordinary courtesy of debate when he used the word "blackmail." I will not refer further to that point. I did not understand the hon. Member for the London University to say that the recent action of the Board of Education has not been in accordance with the traditional principles of administration in this country.

*SIR PHILIP MAGNUS said he had distinctly stated that he thought the action of the Board of Education, in the manner in which they issued the regulations to which he had referred, was not in accordance with the traditional principles of the administration of the Board in England.

MR. McKENNA: The principles referred to in the Amendment are the principles of fair dealing. It is intended to charge me with unfair dealing. I do not gather that the hon. Member wishes to say that; he only disagrees with the method of dealing with secondary schools by regulation. The answer to that is that secondary schools have never been dealt with otherwise than by regulation, and if I had dealt with them in any other way I would have established a precedent. I have followed absolutely the course which alone has been followed by the Board in past years. I gave ample notice on 15th May of the intentions of the Board, and those intentions were received at the time not with disfavour by the hon. Baronet opposite, who, speaking on the evening of 15th May, on the subject of training colleges, admirably summarised the effect of the change. He said:—

> "The requirements of the proposed conscience clause did not seem to him to amount to more than this, that Nonconformists would be able to go to Church colleges, and that Church of England students would be able to go to Nonconformist colleges, both without any fear of proselytising."

Then with regard to the secondary schools, I am much indebted to the hon. Gentleman for his kindly words in reference to these, and for saying that at any rate some of the regulations had improved the standard of education in these schools. No one would suggest that these regulations are issued for all time. There is a tendency in education as well as in other things, and regulations are issued in order to regulate or promote that tendency; but these regulations are subject to alterations from year to year, and it would not be fair to argue that because the regulations of 1907 would have a particular effect if continued for ever, they were therefore bad. It is quite conceivable that in 1909, 1910, or 1912, they may be changed in one direction or another, perhaps more, perhaps less than they had been changed in 1907. The hon. Member for South Kerry raised a question in regard to the refusal of the Board of Education to accept a resolution of the Southampton local education authority for a waiver of the regulations in the case of a particular Catholic school in that town. I am afraid my hon. friend has not read the regulations perfectly accurately. The particular regulation referred to gave power to the Board to accept or refuse any waiver that might be asked for. The principle upon which the Board proceeded is very clear and simple. In the Southampton case it was found on examination that the school was not essentially a Catholic school. In so far as the children attending the school were concerned, it was largely a Protestant school. It also appeared that the local education authority, while they were asking us for the waiving of the regulations, did not themselves contribute to the support of the school. It would certainly have been construed as a very strong evidence that they considered the school necessary to the educational supply of the district if they were themselves willing to contribute something towards its support, but the local authority were quite willing that Parliament should provide the funds. My hon. friend is always very fair, but he will see that in this case, although there was need for additional secondary school supply in Southampton, it was not for a school of this kind. There was need, not for an additional grant for a Catholic school in which a considerable number of non-Catholic children are being taught, but for an additional supply of secondary school accommodation by the local authority. I think that under these circumstances the Board are justified in refusing to allow the waiver when it is not shown that on the whole the school is a necessary part of the supply of secondary education in Southampton. This case caused me a considerable amount of trouble and anxiety. In every case I do my best to deal with the particular circumstances of the school. Where I am satisfied that the local education authority have acted according to the spirit of the regulations I allow a waiver; but, on the contrary, where I hold that the local authority have not done so, I feel myself bound not to allow the waiver. I have now dealt with all the points which have been raised. It is very difficult for a Minister to answer on the spur of the moment all of the very various charges which may be brought against him. I was attacked by the Leader of the Opposition much more strongly outside this House than I have been in it, because I had misused, so it was said, the powers of my office. I think that before any such charge is made against me I ought to be supplied with the particulars. I am entitled to know what is the particular act that I have committed which is contrary to the previous practice of the Board. I should like to be informed of precisely similar cases, and what the previous action of the Board was, and whether I have departed from it. But at the present time

I am made a target by hon. Gentlemen opposite for vague charges which they have never attempted to substantiate. They charge me with practices contrary to the duties of my office, but what they really mean is that they dislike my policy. They are at perfect liberty to say that they dislike my policy. I do not complain of that, and I should be surprised if they did not. I am not put here to carry out their policy; but they are not entitled, when all that they mean is that they do not like what I am doing, to charge me personally with unfair dealing; and I ask if they wish to persist in that course that they should give me definite facts so that I can either definitely refute them or definitely admit them. I can assure them that they will never find me unwilling to meet any charges which they have to make against me.

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON (Oxford University): The right hon. Gentleman has to some extent based his defence against one of the charges made by the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone, upon a portion of my policy, when I was at the Board of Education. He maintains that he has not departed from this policy. I do not agree with him. I do not for a moment object to the views of the right hon. Gentleman merely because they are not identical with my own, nor do I expect that he should carry out an educational policy which I am likely to appreciate. What the noble Lord meant, and what I mean in supporting his Amendment, is that the right hon. Gentleman has departed from the traditional principles of administration. The Board of Education has to discharge a number of judicial functions; and we expect that judicial functions should be discharged in a judicial spirit. It has to determine many points of difference between the local educational authorities and the managers. It has to determine, judicially, when the moment has arrived to bring into force the Defaulting Authorities Act. Last session there was in the case of the Merionethshire teachers an acknowledged case of extreme hardship which the right hon. Gentleman might have remedied in a moment. But he simply referred the teachers to a court of law, and it was not until weeks afterwards that tardy justice was done by the local authorities to the teachers. I believe that in the Swansea case, the managers complained, in the spring of 1905, of differential treatment by the local educational authority of Swansea, and when I left office at the close of 1905, the question whether the voluntary school managers had been fairly treated, had come almost to an issue. My successor in office was clearly of opinion that the school was not fairly treated, because in the middle of 1906 he desired the local education authority to take the earliest possible steps to remedy the undoubtedly unfair situation. When the right hon. Gentleman came into office, the local authority raised an entirely different case, and were allowed to start a new demand for a playground. The managers did their utmost to provide a playground and sent in plans to the local authority, but the local authority was allowed to suspend the maintenance of the schools, and the managers had to pay for it out of their own pockets for several months, until at last the Board of Education took the matter up, and the right hon. Gentleman adopted a course which, as he tells us, is approved by the managers if not by the local authority. I do not say that the eventual settlement was not satisfactory, but I do contend that the local authority was allowed quite unnecessarily and unreasonably to prolong the proceedings, and to refuse maintenance, during which time the managers had to pay for the maintenance out of their own pockets.

MR. McKENNA: I did not interfere because I had no means of preventing it.

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON: The Board of Education had plenty of means at its disposal to prevent hardship to the managers when the local authority refused to pay money which they had to pay, and which they ought to pay. As to the case of the Garforth voluntary school, the right hon. Gentleman states that it merely depended upon a point of law. There was much more in the case than a mere question of law. There was no doubt a lack of accommodation in the voluntary school. The accommodation supplied by the Roman Catholics and the Anglicans between them did not meet the needs of the population, and the local authority proceeded to provide it. This was fair enough. The voluntary school was overcrowded, and it was necessary and reasonable that some children should be transferred from it to the council school. But what the local authority wanted was to turn the voluntary school into an infants' school so that the parents of the children who desired denominational teaching for their children above the age of seven would be compelled to send them to a board school where they would not get it. That was obviously unfair. It was an instance of the fact that there are local authorities who are desirous, so far as they can, to dispense with the existence of voluntary schools. The Board of Education not once only but twice told them that their action in the matter was unjustifiable: and then in the middle of July the Board of Education changed their policy, and allowed the local authority to proceed in the direction they desired. The case then went into Court, and the Judge who tried it, a very careful Judge, said some things which I regret should have to be said about a Government Department. Mr. Justice Channell said in his judgment—

> "The House of Lords held that the liability to maintain is a liability to maintain the school as it was and not as it might be."

That is, as a school for children of all ages with no power to turn it into an infant school. The learned Judge also said—

> "The directions given by the defendants were *ultra vires* and there was no jurisdiction in the Board of Education to make them *intra vires* and any direction to do so was *ultra vires* of the Board. In truth and in substance, the course taken in the present case seems to be simply an attempt to get out of the decision of the House of Lords, that voluntary schools must be taken as they are, and it is an unsuccessful attempt."

He goes on to say that—

> "One thing neither the Board nor the defendants can do is to say that because they do not like the law as it stands they will give directions which will frustrate its objects."

The Judge clearly seems to think that the Board have deliberately attempted to set aside the decision of the House of Lords, for he says later—

> "There are some words in the Act which make it a matter of doubt whether a Court of Law can interfere, if the Board of Education are prepared to take the responsibility of disregarding the law."

It is not pleasant to think that a Government Department can be supposed to contemplate such a course. It appears to me the Judge took the view that the decision of the House of Lords was clear, that it was binding on the Board of Education and that the Board of Education disregarded the decision of the House of Lords, in endeavouring to make the law not what it was but what they wished it to be. Happily the decision of the Lords in the West Riding case made this a point for a Court of Law to decide, as it did, and set matters right, although there are some words in the Act which might make it difficult if the Board of Education was deliberately determined to ignore the law. After that decision and the facts on which it was based one does lose a certain amount of confidence in the administration of the Department, and although in one case there may be a mistake of fact and another may be a mistake of law, the steps all point the same way, and there seems to be a determination on the part of the Board to put a construction on the Act which presses hardly upon the voluntary schools. That is all I have to say, as to the judicial action of the Board, in regard to voluntary schools. I now turn to the regulations. Now the regulations may be good or they may be bad. I am not going to discuss that but what I do say is that whether good or bad, there are portions of those regulations which ought not to have been merely administrative acts, but which ought to have been dealt with by legislation. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said and said with perfect truth—

> "There is no legislation of any sort dealing with the subsidising of training colleges."

And that is equally true with regard to the grants made to the secondary schools. Why is it that Parliament has never imposed any conditions on the treatment by the Board of money given to it for training colleges and secondary schools? What is the explanation? It is because the Board has always been trusted to deal with these matters educationally. You may look at the whole history of these regulations for training colleges and secondary schools, and you may look in vain for any clause or article which imposes any religious restriction of any sort or kind, except the statutory requirement of the conscience clause, upon a grant of money by the Board of Education. There has been no such restriction and now what happens? The Minister by an administrative act imposes as a condition of a grant to all future training colleges the acceptance of the Cowper-Temple clause, and he makes a regulation in regard to existing denominational training colleges—which are something like four-fifths of the whole number of training colleges — which will practically have the effect of leaving them denominational colleges merely in name and full of undenominational students. That is the effect of these regulations. I will not go into their merits. I entirely endorse my own statement of the 15th May which has been read out with such emphasis and better than I could have done it myself by the President of the Board of Education. I was then glad, and am glad now, that the Nonconformists should be able to go to a Church of England training college, or the Anglican should go to the Nonconformist college, without any fear of their religious opinions being in any way interfered with. But this need not have changed the character of colleges by insistence on rules which may flood them with Nonconformist students, and it is a very different thing to impose, by a regulation, on all colleges, whether they are provided out of public or private funds, the acceptance of this Cowper-Temple clause. The same is the case with regard to the secondary school regulations. I hope the House and all interested in secondary schools will bear in mind that the secondary school regulations contain an article in which it is promised that if the local authority by resolution declares to the Board of Education that a school is a necessary part of the accommodation for secondary education in the district, and that they desire that it should go on as it is, the Board will take that into account. I know of several such cases, and I shall be glad to learn whether the President of the Board of Education attaches much importance to the wishes, on this point, of those great popularly elected authorities, which his followers profess to admire and support. But there is another point, and that is the effect of these regulations upon trust deeds. The Board of Education have succeeded to the powers of the Charity Commissioners in regard to endowed schools, and it is idle to tell us as the President has told us, that those powers are not judicial and not to be exercised in a judicial spirit. I recollect very well that at the time of the passing of the Education Act of 1899 there were many Members of this House who expressed fear lest when the powers of dealing with these trusts were handed over from a non-political to a political department, they might be used for political purposes, or at any rate for sectarian purposes. I recollect it very well, because it was the second time that I ventured to address the House, and I hope with becoming modesty I urged that a Government Department such as the Board of Education, might be trusted to administer these judicial powers in a judicial spirit, and I refused to entertain for a moment the idea that the Department would depart from the rules and practice of the Charity Commissioners in regard to trust deeds. I well remember that Lord Hugh Cecil took a different view and made a point of the fact that I had then only just emerged from academic seclusion, and did not know the ways of Government Departments but I went on my way confident that I was right, and I am very sorry to say that I have been proved wrong. But we are told that the Government are doing nothing more than we did when we passed the Kenyon-Slaney clause. What does the Kenyon-Slaney clause do? The trust deeds of certain schools placed the whole control of the religious instruction in the hands of the parson. The Kenyon-Slaney clause provided that the religious instruction, which must be in accordance with the terms of the trust, should not be solely in the hands of the parson, but should be in the hands of the parson and his colleagues the managers of the schools. But does anyone suppose that the character of the schools or of the religious teaching of the schools was altered? As a matter of fact it was not altered in any way.

MR. MCKENNA: Is it altered here?

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON: When you say that no religious catechism or formulary distinctive of any religious denomination shall be used in the teaching of a secondary school—

MR. MCKENNA: Training college.

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON: I am talking at this moment of secondary schools, and I say that you propose to alter and seriously alter those trusts, and alter the religious character of the schools. I was dealing with secondary schools at the moment. I spoke of existing training colleges before, and pointed out that they are required to submit to regulations which will alter their character, and which will introduce a Nonconformist element into their body, on a scale which will entirely defeat the scheme of religious education under which they have hitherto lived. In the case of secondary schools the Chancellor of the Exchequer said that the action of the Kenyon-Slaney clause was a hard act of the legislature, whereas here the people concerned were invited "on their own initiative to put into operation the machinery of the Charitable Trusts Acts so that their trusts can be made more elastic and so as to enable them to avail themselves of the aid of public money." What is meant by the trusts being made more elastic? It means, in my opinion, that the character of the whole institution will be altered. What is meant by initiative? There is no initiative. What is said to the Colleges is, "Do it or be starved." I think that if that alternative is put before them the initiative is of a somewhat illusory character. The right hon. Gentleman did not seem to think that it mattered very much whether these things were done by legislation or adminstration. Surely it does matter very much whether religious disabilities are imposed by Statute or by a Government department which uses money entrusted to it for educational purposes in order to impose sectarian restriction. I think it matters a great deal. We have heard a great deal about the mode in which the £100,000 was smuggled through the House and is now used in a manner which certainly needs to be inquired into. That again was a matter which ought to have come before the House of Commons and which has gone from its purview, and when the right hon. Gentleman maintained that everything was constitutional with regard to the £100,000 he forgot that it is not merely the disposal of the money that can be questioned, but that the Public Accounts Committee emphatically denounced this method of obtaining the money.

MR. McKENNA: The Public Accounts Committee condemned it on the ground of surprise, that the House might not be aware of what it was voting. That could be the case and it did not exist in this matter.

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON: I must remind the right hon. Gentleman that when the Estimates were moved these regulations were not on the table. We knew nothing whatever except the words of the Estimate, namely, that the £100,000 was to be used to assist the local authorities in building schools. There was no explanation as to the conditions under which it was to be used. It was perfectly true that we knew some time before that the Board of Education was going to ask for £100,000. But of the destination of that £100,000 we knew nothing whatever except that it was for the use of the local authorities. The whole thing was so carried on that we on this side of the House really wish to know something more about the employment of the money, although hon. Members opposite may be quite willing to vote as the Ministers decide. By this use of administrative powers there have now been withdrawn from this House matters which were proper for our discussion, and the way in which the Government have withdrawn those matters from the purview of this House is only a part of the general policy of the Government in the matter of procedure. We know how many of the Bills that Government introduce go to another place undiscussed as to large portions of them, and now we are informed that legislation is needless if a Mnister can effect his purpose by regulation or administrative act. No doubt he can do so. The powers of administration are very wide, they were left very wide, because this House and the country always believed they would not be robbed of their proper rights of discussion. In the course of this last year, not merely in the matter of the £100,000, not merely in the cases that we have seen day by day in the administrative and judicial work of the Board, but in the introduction of serious matters into the regulations which ought to have been brought before us in the form of legislation, we have reason to distrust the Department. It is a matter of very great regret that a Department, the greater part of whose work ought to be uncontroversial, should by these new regulations have brought into the region of political and religious controversy matters as to which happily hitherto there had only been differences of opinion on purely educational grounds.

Mr. ACLAND (Yorkshire, Richmond) said that one point which struck him in the speech he had just listened to was that in which the hon. Baronet talked about religious disabilities being forced upon schools by these regulations. The hon. Baronet actually quoted the opening words of the Cowper-Temple Clause as to no catechism or formula of any particular denomination being taught in the schools, and said that that had been violently imposed on the voluntary schools. That was an absolute mistake. The Cowper-Temple Clause had not been imposed on the voluntary schools at all. The conscience clause, a totally different thing, had been introduced in the secondary schools and it was a very good thing too. But with regard to the Cowper-Temple Clause that applied to elementary schools only, and there were dozens of those schools under these regulations which were still going on just as before without any interference from the Board of Education.

*Sir WILLIAM ANSON said there was a distinct regulation that no catechism or formulary distinctive of any particular religious denomination should be used in any schools which were paid the higher grant, nor in any schools which applied for grants for the first time after this year. There was great doubt left in the regulations whether a school which received the lower grant this year, and which continued its denominational teaching, would next year receive any grant at all.

Mr. ACLAND thought it would be still found that under these regulations as under the old, there were dozens of schools which still received the lower and higher grants which were going on in the way they always had without interference. To represent the provision contained in this regulation as the violent imposition of the religious disabilities of the Cowper-Temple Clause on the secondary schools was to represent what was not the fact. The charge of unfair dealing as between one side and the other seemed, when it came to the test, to dwindle down to very small proportions. It was admitted that the cases of Merioneth and Swansea had been settled and there was no charge with regard to them, and the only case that remained with regard to the action of the right hon. Gentleman was Garforth. As to that the most that could be said was that there was a mistake as to the proper interpretation of the Act. When the cry of unjust treatment of schools dwindled down to that case he thought the cry which they heard so often through the recess could not have much foundation. It so happened that he for some years was employed as a civil servant in the Secondary Board of Education, and therefore he could give an answer to one or two points which had been raised by the hon. Gentleman who seconded the Motion as to whether or not there had been a departure from previous custom in the manner in which these regulations had been issued. It was suggested that these regulations should have been laid on the Table for a month; that that was the usual course in these matters; and that in the case of these resolutions that had not been done. He could show that that was not so when regulations, as in this case, were included in the Directory of the Science and Art branch of the Education Department. The Directory had never been laid on the Table of the House. With regard to the charge that the new regulations were suddenly sprung on the House a few weeks before they came into force he could testify, having been concerned in the annual production of the Directory, that these regulations came out rather earlier than was usually the case in the Directory with regard to the secondary schools. The Board of Education had for successive years modified and interfered with the general conditions under which these schools got their grants quite apart from the educational provisions made for particular schools. He remembered a great stir among the secondary schools in receipt of grants when Clause 7 of the Directory said that grants would thereafter only be given to secondary schools acting in unity with the local authority. Things which made a very great stir had been done by the Directory quite oustside the ordinary provisions with regard to the government of the schools. They have been done for years prior to the tenure of the present Government. What did all this come to after all? The atmosphere of the colleges would still be preserved in spite of the regulations, for the teachers in the future as in the past would be members of the denomination, and the governing body would be as purely denominational as before. All that the regulations would do would be to enable a student who professed a different belief, but who yet desired to be admitted to a college, to say that he was of a different denomination rather than that he should do as many hundreds of teachers had been willing to do in the past—be confirmed, for instance, if he desired to enter a Church College, though still retaining his own faith and so acting the hypocrite. The present system was far better. He desired, in conclusion, to comment on another point, namely, the allegation that there had been no discussion of these matters. He had a very painful cognisance of the extent to which opportunity was afforded for discussion. He had stood up last session every time there was a discussion on education, hoping to get called upon, but he had not that privilege. At the end of the session it struck him that it would be worth while to add up the number of hours fruitlessly occupied in rising in his place during the discussions last session. The right hon. Baronet had said that education was never discussed last session. He entirely agreed with him. But these other matters, the question of the £100,000 and the question of training colleges, were actually before the House for eleven hours, and they were vehemently discussed on more than one occasion; therefore, it was rather hard to be told now that these things had been sprung upon them without opportunity for discussion or control.

*SIR FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan) said the right hon. Gentleman would forgive his expression of the very great regret with which he had heard some of the remarks which had fallen from him, one of them being that he was not placed on that bench in order to do their will. He ventured to say that the Minister for Education, whichever side of the House he might sit upon, was bound to have regard to education as a whole. If there was anything which, under our system of Government, ought to be outside party politics, it was education. If they looked at the school, and the child in the school, they would see what an absurdity it was even to think that the educational future of that child should depend on the political ascendancy of one or other political party at the time. He believed that if the truth were told the right hon. Gentleman had some regret that the House had not had an opportunity in the year 1907 of fully considering the Education Code; because in answer to a Question which he had put to him in May he distinctly stated that one of the allotted days would be devoted to the discussion of the Education Estimates. That promise made to the House through him was not fulfilled. He had no doubt that circumstances had proved too strong for the right hon. Gentleman, but he trusted that the disappointment felt on that occasion would form some apology for his taking part in the debate that night. He did not think much had turned on the legality or otherwise of the regulations. No doubt regulations had been made from time to time for many years; and there was one remarkable circumstance about the regulations of this year that several pages of them were occupied by what was termed an extract from, but which he believed was rather a transcript of the regulations of his right hon. friend below him, issued in 1904–5. Regulations had been issued from time to time, but there were several characteristics which marked them all. They had been submitted under such circumstances that they could be thoroughly well considered by those who were brought within the range of their influence. There was an opportunity given for representations being made to the Government of the day. There were means of full discussion, and he believed he was not wrong in his memory when he said that the wholesome fruit of many of the debates was that regulations were modified in important particulars, and all those who cared for education were brought into one line and acted, for the most part, with concord. Last year they had to complain that the regulations were issued too late. One Member who preceded him seemed to hold a different opinion. He was himself the governor of no less than five large schools, and they had never had an opportunity of considering these regulations. The summer holiday had commenced, and their opportunity was not merely limited, but was absolutely non-existent. Not only had they to complain of the late period at which the regulations were issued, but they had also to complain of the character of those regulations. They were regulations which had in the most material manner changed many of the schools. In some cases, it was true, the changes had been such that either they could be accepted at once, or were so slight as to be no change at all. He believed in many cases day schools could be worked under them, but as a governor of large boarding schools he was perfectly certain that the regulations were not consistent with the proper working of many such schools. The provision as to free places was entirely inconsistent with the system and organisation of a great boarding school. And the regulations, as now laid down, would affect religious teaching. These changes were, he did not say of a vital character, but of such a nature that they ought to have been produced in ample time to give those who were parents, and those who were responsible as masters and examiners for the working of the schools, every opportunity of full discussion and ample consideration. As regarded the Church training colleges he was in a position to say that those who had influence in those institutions were prepared to deal with the proposals coming from the Government, he did not say in a sympathetic, but he did say in a liberal spirit. At a meeting held yesterday, under the presidency of the Archbishop of Canterbury, a meeting representing, he believed with about two exceptions, all the Church of England training colleges, a resolution was passed that they would accept a conscience clause, provided that the exceptions and the working of that conscience clause did not interfere with the general character of the school and the object and purposes for which it had been founded at an enormous cost, and so continued during many years. He would certainly rejoice if some solution could be found for the difficulty. The work done by the training colleges had been of a most admirable character. It had made a great impression upon the life of successive generations, and those salutary influences by which had been formed the character of those who attended the colleges would be continued in their children. He himself deprecated purely secular education, and if there were any institutions in which a purely secular education would be fatal it would be the training colleges wherein pupil-teachers were taught, and wherein their characters were moulded. He would not enter into details as regarded the regulations. They were perhaps rather too minute in their character to be discussed across the floor of the House. He sincerely hoped that other opportunities might be given for discussion, in order that some adjustment might be made or some modification effected, so that the operation of the regulations, so modified, might be less harsh than they at present appeared. The right hon. Gentleman in charge of the regulations had dropped a hint which he was prepared to welcome, that these regulations were not permanent in their character, and he hoped they never would be. The system of our education was a growing and an expanding system, and except the regulations by which that education was carried on were elastic they would be an incongruity and an impossibility fatal to sound and healthy progress in education. He certainly sincerely hoped that the Government, whichever Government might be in power, would never approach this subject or deal with it in a spirit of conquest. It was essential to the progress of education that there should be a spirit of harmony and concord, a spirit of mutual confidence and kindly regard. It was only in the atmosphere created by such a spirit that the minds of the young people could be developed and their characters formed in such a manner that they might become useful members of society and perform in their turn those great duties to their families and to the country which each generation in succession was called upon to discharge. He hoped that in the course of the next few months there would be such modifications made that present difficulties might be removed, and he was sure that the result of such modifications would be greater content with the system under which schools were guided, and therefore a more firm and a more salutary progress in the good work of education.

*MR. ADKINS (Lancashire, Middleton) said there were few Members in any part of the House who, if like the hon. Baronet they cared for education, would have cause to regret what had happened in that debate on the noble Lord's Amendment. It was indeed open to comment that on a formal Amendment to the Address they should have had individual cases brought forward in a way which was more appropriate to the Estimates, but he doubted if anyone in the House, even the noble Lord himself, continued to pay much attention to the individual cases which had been so thoroughly disposed of. What had been undoubtedly interesting was to perceive the attempt made by one or two hon. Gentlemen on the other side, not merely to express very different educational views of the regulations, but to suggest that there was something almost unconstitutional or entirely out of tradition in the way in which his right hon. friend had dealt with the matter. He would like to point out that the hon. Baronet opposite who had made the greater part of his speech turn on the iniquity of the new regulations with regard to training colleges, over and over again said that while he was willing to see Nonconformists admitted to Church colleges and Churchmen to Nonconformist colleges, this was going to destroy the character of these training colleges. What did the character of an institution depend on, upon those who were admitted, or rather on those who were governing it? On what did the character of philanthropic societies or any organisation for any good purpose depend? On those who were in control of it. By these regulations the control of training colleges was absolutely left untouched. Under these regulations although four-fifths of the money necessary to maintain them came from public sources to which everyone contributed, they were still to be left exclusively to private management with a special atmosphere and with tests for teachers and officials. If that was to be debated there was far more ground for criticism on that side of the House at the imperfect way in which sound principles had been applied than for ingratitude on the part of Members opposite, who had so much of their traditional privileges left to them even under a Liberal Administration. Then they were told there was something strangely unusual or unconstitutional in suggesting that there should be no additional training colleges of a denominational character in future. His right hon. friend had read a letter the other day in public which perhaps he might be allowed to refer to. This was a letter written by the Board of Education in 1898 in reply to a request for the establishment of an additional denominational college. In it the applicant was informed that the Report of the majority of the Royal Commission on the Elementary Education Act, while recommending that grants to existing denominational colleges should not be disturbed, did not appear to favour the recognition of new colleges of that character. It was further pointed out that if the grant was made to an additional denominational training college its permanence would be extremely doubtful, and the award of such a grant might not improbably raise the religious test question not only with regard to that college but also as regarded existing training colleges, and therefore the Board was of opinion that the proposed college should not be recognised. That was done while the Duke of Devonshire was Minister for Education, and the application was refused. Six years after, when the hon. Baronet was representing the Board of Education, an additional denominational training college was sanctioned. They had these decisions inconsistent with each other done by pure acts of administration, without the House being consulted at all; and then when the problem was dealt with by the right hon. Gentleman issuing regulations which were made public the House was told forsooth that that was not in accordance with tradition. It was not indeed in accordance with the secret tradition of doing these things secretly without letting the House know; but it was in accordance with the better tradition of letting the House of Commons know before the administration took a definite line upon a matter of this kind. He would like to say a word with regard to the regulations affecting the secondary schools. The hon. Baronet had said it was the duty of the Board of Education to deal with these matters publicly and educationally. They might frankly admit that they took different views, not only of educational aims, but of educational methods, and it was inevitable that methods adopted by one President and by that House at one time might not be in accord with the wishes of the minority or with the views they entertained, but he was certain that the great majority of the House held that these regulations which were passed after a debate on 15th May, and which again came up for discussion on the Estimates on 11th July, were intended to deal educationally with educational problems, and they did so deal. One great reason for many of these regulations—that most important regulation which opened wider the door of secondary schools to the children of the poor, the regulation no less important which connected secondary school work with the representative local institutions of the country—was that they were increasingly demanded because they required money and help, not merely from Parliament, but from local authorities, and they would never get it from local authorities unless they had adequate representation and unless the interests of the public generally were aroused. Accordingly these regulations one and all, whether they were agreed to by hon. Members opposite or whether they were disagreed with, were at any rate supported on that side of the House on educational grounds. He was sure no one who had heard the whole of that debate would have any hesitation whatever in coming to the conclusion that there was no ground on which any reasonable man could impugn the right hon. Gentleman personally or the Board of Education generally, of doing anything which was not inspired by a sincere desire to assist secondary education in the country, where it was far from being what it should be.

*MR. LYTTELTON (St. George's, Hanover Square): The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down seemed to imagine that positions generally taken up by my noble friend have been abandoned in the course of the debate. I do not think that is the case. I do not wish to use harsh language. I quite agree that it would be a deplorable thing for this country if our Government Departments were administered in a spirit of partisanship. But I am sorry to say I think there has been given in this debate ground for believing that there has been partisanship shown in the administration of the Department of Education. I do not think the right hon. Gentleman has given an adequate or indeed any reply to many of the charges made against him and his Department, and I think it would be insincere for me if for a moment I pretended I thought he had. Nothing is more desirable to continue in this country than the general respect for the Government. I agree that we have our differences about policy, but there is a wide-spread belief that successive Governments will fairly and impartially administer the laws of the country even when they have the most profound disagreement with them. The right hon. Gentleman thought he had disposed of the specific cases brought forward by my noble friend. But he has entirely failed to do so. It is a scandal that when his right hon. colleague the Chief Secretary so long ago as September, 1906, definitely pronounced the action of the local authority at Swansea unjust and unfair in withholding from the teachers in voluntary schools salaries which he proclaimed himself ought to be paid to them—I say without hesitation it is a scandal that that matter should be hung up for nearly eighteen months before any effect was given to his words. And more than that, there is a second charge. The local authority at Swansea with regard to the buildings set up first the case that there should be a certain play-ground accommodation. The managers professed themselves quite prepared to comply with that, but no sooner had they done that than the request was substantially altered, so that the care they had shown, the trouble they had taken, and the cost they had been put to, were at any rate for a long time thrown away.

MR. MCKENNA: I am fully familiar with all the facts in both cases, and I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that he is mistaken in every point. If he will quote the letters and the correspondence I can prove to him that he is absolutely wrong on each point.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I will give the right hon. Gentleman the particulars. First with regard to salaries. I summarise what the Chief Secretary for Ireland said with regard to this matter. We have heard from the Minister that this matter had been rumbling for some time. The matter came to a head, and the Chief Secretary said on 31st July, 1906—

> "The Board of Education are not aware of any circumstances which would justify a differentiation of the salaries paid to teachers in voluntary and council schools. They feel that the present uncertainty is unjust to the teachers and is gravely imperilling the efficiency of the schools."

It is a scandal that after such a declaration from a right hon. Gentleman not passionately addicted to voluntary schools that this rule should not have been put into effect and the salaries of the teachers paid until 18 months after.

MR. MCKENNA: Really, I do not think the right hon. Gentleman is familiar with educational practice. How could I put the declaration of my right hon friend into practice? They were not in default.

*MR. LYTTELTON: That is precisely what the right hon. Gentleman said with regard to Merionethshire.

MR. MCKENNA: Will the right hon. Gentleman finish with the Swansea first?

*MR. LYTTELTON: I will take which case I think fit. The scandal occurred in Merioneth of a local authority not paying the teachers their salaries which they had earned, and the absence of which caused them to lose their holidays. We pressed the right hon. Gentleman and finally moved the adjournment of the House, and what was the result? That those teachers were paid. Would not a similiar result have followed if pressure had been put on the local authority in Swansea by the right hon. Gentleman and by a debate in this House? Is the right hon. Gentleman so powerless with the Default Act on the Statute Book that he can allow an injustice to take place with reference to the payment of teachers and declare that he is without a remedy? The hon. Baronet sitting near me says that the right hon. Gentleman has power.

MR. MCKENNA: In the case of Merionethshire the arrangements had been made with the teachers and the amounts specified in the agreements had not been paid. Consequently Merionethshire was in default, and I did exercise my powers and saw that the teachers were paid. In the Swansea case, however, the teachers were paid according to their agreements, and I had no power to go behind those agreements.

*MR. LYTTELTON: The managers expressed their desire to the right hon. Gentleman to pay the salaries at a higher rate.

MR. MCKENNA: They did not do it.

*MR. LYTTELTON: They professed their desire to do so in writing to the right hon. Gentleman, who had the authority of his right hon. friend that the failure to pay these salaries was an injustice, gravely imperilling the efficiency of the schools, and if the right hon. Gentleman in his quiet moments, when he is not in that state of excitement to which he is subjected at present, will say that in such a situation he is powerless, then somebody will answer him in the course of the debate. I come now to the matter of buildings. There was a school of 900 in which the first demand was that that number should be reduced to 500, and that there should be a certain cubic space of playground provided, and this provision was made. Then the right hon. Gentleman said the managers had totally misunderstood the requisition, and that there was a different amount of playground space requisite for a school of 500 from that of a school for 900. Is that a fair way of treating the managers of the school who had gone to the extent of providing the cubic space they were first invited to do by the local authority? A settlement of this question has I believe been come to and, if the right hon. Gentleman says that the settlement has nothing to do with the meeting of Parliament, I will accept what he says. But the delay is a scandal, and it existed for months and months.

MR McKENNA: Where do I appear in this? I was not responsible for the delay.

*MR. LYTTELTON: If the right hon. Gentleman says he has no influence with the local authority, I do not accept that. I am sure he means it honestly, and I do not impugn his veracity. I do not believe, however, that the Minister for Education in a Liberal Administration has no influence with a Radical local authority in Wales.

MR. McKENNA: I think if the right hon. Gentleman were in my place he would know it frequently.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I now take the case of Garforth. Here is a large mixed school admittedly overcrowded, and the education authority require that the overcrowding should be diminished, and a new school is built. Surely the right thing would have been to have drafted those children who wished to go to the Board school from the voluntary school which was overcrowded. But the action of the local authority in this case simply ruined the voluntary school altogether, because they laid down in effect that after reaching seven years of age every single child should be drafted into the Board school, and should from that time lose its power of attendance at the voluntary school.

MR. McKENNA: That is not the order.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I have read Mr. Justice Channell's judgment with great care, and I say that was the order. This particular school was by the decree of the local authority, and with the support of the Board of Education, practically changed into an infants' school.

MR. McKENNA: That again is not the fact.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I am afraid I cannot accept the right hon. Gentleman's statement against that of the Judge who tried the case. Mr. Justice Channell has found that this school was being transformed from a school of children of all ages into an infant school, when the obvious course would have been to draft into the Board school the children whose parents desired it, independently of their age, and not altogether emasculate the teaching in the school by withdrawing all those over seven years of age. This case shows conclusively that a harsh policy was adopted, and it was a capricious and illegal policy with regard to voluntary schools. All those charges are made out by the actual facts of the case, by the decision of the Law Courts, and finally by the honest judgment of the right hon. Gentleman's predecessor. The right hon. Gentleman considers that he has dealt satisfactorily with the training college regulations, and I quite admit that they contain some excellent educational provisions. I will also say that those who are most interested in them are meeting the matter in a spirit of broadness and liberality, but nevertheless I cannot exempt the Minister for Education from a grave misconception of his duty. When those regulations were issued the right hon. Gentleman evidently was not aware of the serious legal difficulties existing. The machinery for passing these regulations without discussion, or at any rate without adequate discussion in this House has brought upon the right hon. Gentleman the fate that such tactics deserve. There is nothing like a discussion in this House for pointing out the infirmities of a scheme. The right hon. Gentleman had to wait until Sir Robert Finlay s opinion was published before he was aware that he had issued regulations imposing a fine of £100 upon the doing of that which it would have been illegal to do. If these regulations had been discussed in this House that infirmity would have been brought to the right hon. Gentleman's mind.

MR. McKENNA: I was aware of it.

*MR. LYTTELTON: The right hon. Gentleman says he was aware of that fact and yet he resorted to this remarkable method to cure it. He invited the trustees to be partners and principals with him in breaking the most fundamental part of their trusts. He asked them to do that which was illegal by inviting them to make their institutions mixed colleges whereas they were denominational colleges. Surely he could not have expected that any trustees would do such a thing as that. The right hon. Gentleman said he would favourably receive any such application, but I will defy any lawyers from the Ministerial side of the House to get up and say that in administering the Charitable Trusts Act the right hon. Gentleman is not administering with judicial authority. I will defy any lawyer of position to say that the Minister for Education is correct in saying that his duties under the Charitable Trusts Acts are purely administrative or even if they were, that he did not break the elementary duty which belongs to every administrator, and still more to every Judge, to hear the parties interested before he pledged himself to give a decision against them. What did the right hon. Gentleman do? He pledged himself to offer every facility to trustees coming with applications for the alteration and variation of the trusts. That might have involved an entire departure from the wishes of the founders. The founders might be alive or their representatives might be there. The right hon. Gentleman before hearing the founders —[Laughter]. The right hon. Gentleman may laugh, but is he really so ignorant of the elementary process of justice, and does he think that it can commend itself to any fair-minded man on his own side of the House that he should openly publish that his mind is predisposed towards an alteration or variation in trusts of which he is made the judge?

MR. McKENNA: Under the Charitable Trusts Act application must be made to me by the trustees themselves, and I informed the trustees with such courtesy as I could that that course was always open to them.

*MR. LYTTELTON: The right hon. Gentleman's memory has again failed him. I do not think the right hon. Gentleman will deny that in the letter which he wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury he said that every facility would be given for such applications. If I understand the meaning of the English language he meant that he would facilitate applications made by trustees for the variation of their trusts, although he has never heard the founders of the trusts or their representatives. Now let me say a word as to the merits with respect to the training colleges. I do not think it is strictly accurate to say that a grant of public money is made to the training colleges. Let me explain to the House exactly what occurs. The students obtain scholarships for £50 or £70 a year. This money is got by their own exertions and can be spent in perfecting their education as teachers when they are seventeen or eighteen years of age. The present system enables these embryo teachers to go to whatever training college they think right, whether denominational or undenominational or Roman Catholic, there to use the money earned by their brains. The training college to which they make application is not entitled to a single shilling from them until the close of the two years in which they study, and the receipt of a certificate from the Board of Education that that study has perfected them in the education the Board of Education demand. Therefore, I think nothing could be fairer than that these young people should have the power if they please of selecting any of the training colleges which are open to them. That is the position. I quite admit that there are not sufficient undenominational colleges now in existence, and that is the difficulty which the hon. Member below the gangway pointed out. It is possible when there is no more room in an undenominational college for a student to strain his conscience and to go to a denominational college. How would a fair-minded man meet that difficulty? Surely the conclusion to be drawn from these facts is not that both the denominational and the undenominational colleges should lose their character, but that something should be done to get over the difficulty. How have the training colleges dealt with the matter? They have said—and I cannot imagine anything fairer—"We will build, indeed we have built, hostels, and we will accommodate in them the teachers who do not agree with us, and give them all the secular education they desire in our training colleges. We do not admit them at present as residents, but we do the best we can. We accommodate our own teachers first, and we build hostels for the benefit of those who do not agree with us in religious matters, but who desire secular teaching." I think it is a liberal and a reasonable offer. Is it reasonable for the Minister of Education to seek by these regulations to lay the very people who have done most for training colleges under very serious disabilities and to impair the character of their institutions? [Laughter.] An hon. Gentleman laughs at that, and perhaps I can go so far with him as to say that if I myself were head of a training college I would not think that any blow would be inflicted upon the religious life of that college if a Nonconformist were admitted. Neither have I the least doubt that anything but benefit would result by the meeting in the hostel of Nonconformists and members of the Church of England; but that I only give as a personal opinion. After all, it is the system under which many of us have been brought up at the University. There we had free entrance into a great many colleges of men of all kinds of opinion; but there you also have certain denominational colleges, both Nonconformist and Church of England, where those requiring denominational education can receive and enjoy it. But for the future the growth of training colleges in that way will be arrested by these regulations. Is that liberal? I cannot believe that hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite with broad and liberal views, like the Chief Secretary for Ireland, can possibly say that they have a right to tell the managers of training colleges, who have for years done their duty, that they will be prevented from keeping up their own denominational colleges in their own way, and from building hostels for the accommodation of those who differ from them in religion. Surely the true view is that they should, if possible, maintain the religious character of these schools for the thousands of teachers who will wish it to be preserved, those of another opinion being perfectly accommodated in hostels or in undenominational colleges. On such lines one sees reasons for hoping that a settlement may be arrived at without violence to institutions which have done admirable work in the past. The right hon. Gentleman has repeatedly said that the receipt of public money must carry with it the necessity of opening the doors of the training colleges to everybody. I venture to differ from that opinion. I agree with Dr. Clifford that the mere fact that an endowment has been made a long time ago does not constitute any absolute assurance that the faiths for which these endowments were given continue in their former vitality; but I think that the Government can satisfy itself that the faiths for which these endowments were primarily made do exist. If in any case this cannot be done, the true corollary is not the destruction of all the denominational colleges. The true corollary is to find out whether the beliefs which caused them to be founded exist still, and to maintain them where they do, but to give the fullest opportunity by building other colleges for those who entertain different views to obtain similar accommodation.

MR. CAVE (Surrey, Kingston) was most distinctly of opinion that the powers of the Board of Education under the Charitable Trusts Act and transferred to it by statute were powers to be exercised judicially. It was quite clear that was so, because the Act specially provided that the power should not be used except after due notice to all interested, and after giving to everybody concerned a chance of being heard in the matter.

MR. BIRRELL: Hear, hear!

MR. CAVE said the Board of Education had issued regulations under which it was impossible for certain colleges to obtain Government grants under the trust deeds as they stood, because the trust deeds gave a preferential position to certain denominations. What did the right hon. Gentleman do? he published a letter in which he said, "You will get over the difficulty if you apply to the Board to exercise its judicial powers, and we will give you facilities for that." The right hon. Gentleman said that all those matters would not only be open to the Court but that the Court would be prejudiced in favour of the action of the trustees. Any ordinary man would read the letter in that sense. It was not accurate to say that the letter stated "You may apply if you please;" it meant, "We invite you to apply; you had better apply, and when you do come to the Court you will find the Court very much in your favour, and when the other party comes he will find the Court prejudiced against him." That was not a power which ought to be used, or under which any Department of the State ought to act. Suppose that an application was made by a body of trustees to obtain, under these conditions, a money grant, and supposing that the decision of the Board, as no doubt it would be, was in favour of the proposal; and suppose the other persons interested had a right of appeal with the Court of Chancery, if the Court of Chancery reversed the decision of the Board of Education the result must be that because the Court thought that the trust ought to stand, a college presumably efficient and well-conducted would be deprived of any grant owing to the Regulation issued by the Board of Education, and great injustice would be done. He protested against the practice of using a power conferred on a body to be used impartially for one purpose, being employed for the purpose of advancing the policy of a Government. He had the keenest remembrance of the debate on the Merionethshire case and on the Swansea case, and when they were proved to be right in the position they then took in regard to those two cases, they were entitled to look very carefully into the action of the Board of Education. He remembered the defence of the right hon. Gentleman last year in regard to Merionethshire; he doubted whether anyone believed the right hon. Gentleman's answer was satisfactory, and he was afraid that the suspicions they then entertained regarding the action of the Board of Education were well founded. As to the training colleges, he understood that there were more places in the undenominational than in the denominational colleges open to intending teachers; and he thought that after the Board had used the denominational colleges for their own educational purposes for years past, and encouraged them to incur a large expenditure of money upon the buildings, it was hardly fair that they should compel the admission into those colleges of students not professing the faith for the teaching of which they were founded. At any rate, priority for places in those colleges ought to be given to students professing that faith. No such provision was, however, made and students of all denominations, irrespective of their faith, would be admitted. He was glad that the debate had taken place and he believed that it would be a benefit.

*MR. BUTCHER (Cambridge University) said that he gladly admitted that some of the Regulations marked a real educational advance; but he thought that, if they looked at the Regulations as a whole, and as affecting both the training colleges and the secondary schools, it could not be contended that they had regard to the educational rather than to the religious character of these institutions. They displayed indeed unity of plan, but that plan was to reverse the large and wise tolerance hitherto shown in our legislation on education. It was quite true that the Board of Education had frequently carried out important reforms by means of Regulations, and without legislation; but hitherto such action was within the lines of certain settled principles of policy; the Regulations hitherto had not opened up questions which were highly controversial, which cut deep into the religious life of the country, which touched the consciences of men, and which were contrary to the spirit, if not to the letter, of existing legislation. Surely it was the case that the new Regulations were intended to defeat the intention of an Act of Parliament. The Act of 1902, expressly prohibited local educational authorities to do precisely the things which the Board were now doing by Regulation. Under that Act it was forbidden to discriminate in favour of one denomination against another in making grants of public money; and the only test that the legislature had accepted was the test of educational efficiency, not of religious opinion. That was a point of capital importance, and was a complete reply to the argument used by the Minister for Education, and his friends, that the established practice hitherto had been to settle these matters by way of Regulation. Now the religious restriction introduced by the Regulation into denominational schools, went deeper than the Minister for Education would admit. If he understood the right hon. Gentleman rightly, he contended that the religious character of those schools would not be at all impaired by the new Regulations. The right hon. Gentleman said that the religious teaching could be given just as before in accordance with the trusts, except that there would be a conscience clause. He would like to point out as to the nature of the religious teaching henceforth to be permitted, that what was given now was merely precarious facilities instead of the distinctive form of instruction assured under the trust deeds; because the Regulation forbade any catechism or formulary of any particular religious denomination to be taught, except by request of the parents or guardians; and such request "may" be complied with "if the governors think fit." These governors, observe, would not be the governors appointed in accordance with the trusts but the new undenominational governors. That put the denominational teaching entirely at the mercy of a new and perhaps hostile undenominational body; how then could the Minister for Education contend that the religious teaching in the schools would be left as it was before? An hon. Member in the course of his speech asked what it was on which the character of a school depended? and his answer was that it depended upon the control or management. He himself did not entirely agree with that answer, for he thought that the character of the school depended upon the body of the scholars even more than on the management. But accepting that answer, if the character of a school depended on the control, the old character of these schools might be effaced by a new governing body appointed under these Regulations. Unless then a school was prepared to divest itself entirely of the character impressed upon it by its founder, it might be deprived of its full share of the bounty of the State. He would not discuss any technical points in regard to the trust deeds, as they had been dealt with so fully by other hon. Gentlemen. But the Chancellor of the Exchequer declared that hon. Gentlemen on their side of the House seemed to think it a sacrilegious thing to interfere at all with the intention of the pious founders, and he reminded them that the Minister for Education was not the first person who had interfered with trusts. They were none of them so ignorant or obtuse as not to be aware of that fact. They all knew that when trusts were obsolete, or no longer met the requirements of the age, they were liable to be altered and they ought to be altered. There was no one on those Benches who held any such superstitious idea as to the sanctity of trusts. There was therefore nothing new in the idea of modifying trust deeds; but what was a new thing, was this. First of all, that the Board of Education acting in its judicial capacity or exercising *quasi*-judicial powers should, without even hearing the trustees, resolve not to modify but to destroy the trusts in order to carry out a political end; and secondly, that the Board, which hitherto was reputed to be an impartial body, should by a great bribe seek to induce the trustees to cancel their trust deeds. He said by a great bribe; a bribe which at the same time was a veiled threat. He was aware that the Minister for Education disliked the word "bribe." and he noticed that the right hon. Gentleman the other day protested against the word "bribing" being employed. He would remind the right hon. Gentleman that he was only using the word which he selected himself, when he described the process which he proposed to adopt on the 15th of May,—"all that the Board of Education could do was to offer the schools the bribe of the general grant." The right hon. Gentleman blundered with absolute precision upon the word which described his real meaning and intention. But the Chancellor of the Exchequer further said "it is not true that the trusts were interfered with by my right hon. friend"; and his argument proceeded, "if you do not choose to conform to these conditions, well and good; no one will force you." But the money was not to be voted; the schools were to be penalised. Was that the Chancellor's idea of a free act and a voluntary agent? Now turning to the training colleges he desired to mark a distinction which had not hitherto been noted between the Regulations which applied to secondary schools, and the Regulations that applied to the training colleges. The secondary schools forfeited the full grant if they did not accept the new conditions, but they still retained the existing grant; at least for the year 1907–8. Moreover, in the case of secondary schools there were many exceptions and waivers by which the stringency of the rule might be relaxed. In the case of the training colleges, however, there were no waivers or exceptions whatsoever. The training colleges if they refused compliance with these conditions would first of all incur the loss of the grant, and secondly they would be removed from the list of recognised colleges. And yet the Chancellor of the Exchequer said "Nobody forces you." The training colleges stood in a very peculiar position.

The State had made an honourable compact with these colleges; it had encouraged them to give money, to build, to expand and improve their buildings, and the Church of England in response to that encouragement had spent in the last twelve years a sum of no less than £200,000. If it was possible by a mere administrative order to reverse a matter of State policy, which like so many of our constitutional arrangements rested upon tacit and honourable understanding, then he said they had embarked upon a most dangerous departmental movement. He wondered if the House realised how different were the methods adopted by the Board of Education in England and by the Scotch Education Department in dealing with this question. In Scotland there had been for some time a desire that the nation should become the owner of the training colleges which had hitherto been owned by the several churches. But how did the Scotch Department go to work? It negotiated with the colleges, and found out their views. There were no trusts broken; no compulsion used; a price was offered, and the consent of the colleges obtained; so that without administrative coercion the colleges became by purchase the colleges of the State. Nothing could to his mind illustrate more forcibly the difference of the animus shown in England and the principle which was at work in other parts of the Kingdom. The treatment both of secondary schools and training colleges was, in his opinion, nothing less than a concerted attack upon one Church, and the whole repressive force of the State was being brought to bear in order to make that attack succesful. He called that not education but politics, and politics of the most illiberal and sectarian kind.

*MR. BRIDGEMAN (Shropshire, Oswestry) said that the right hon. Gentleman the Minister for Education, in reply to the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone, tried to defend himself from the charge of having neglected the case of the school teachers in Merionethshire and Swansea by saying that he gave way upon the point in dispute. The gravamen of the noble Lord's charge was, however, that he had been an immense time in giving way and doing his duty. He took great credit to himself for giving way, and he read an extract from the *Western Mail* applauding the way in which he had acted, but the complaint was that he had left it till the last moment before he carried out that measure of justice. And everyone knew why he left it till the last moment. Because at the end of the correspondence it became known to him that the Merionethshire local authority had no objection to the Default Act being brought into use, and those who lived in the neighbourhood of Wales knew that the action of local authorities in regard to this deserving body of elementary school teachers had brought them very great unpopularity, and could very well understand that they wished to be relieved of that unpopularity. It was very easy to see the reason why the action was taken at the very last moment, but anyone might have known that an action so mean must, in the long run, have become unpopular. In regard to the Garforth School in the West Riding of Yorkshire, the right hon. Gentleman told them that all that he had done there was to commit a mistake in the construction of the law. He supposed they might call it a "legal inexactitude." But could anybody for one moment think that the interpretation of the Act of 1902 was not perfectly clear, at any rate as far as its intention went, to anybody in the position of the right hon. Gentleman? What the right hon. Gentleman sanctioned there was the turning of a Church of England school which comprised all standards into a junior school, which would send those scholars above Standard III. to an undenominational school; and if he meant to tell them that by sanctioning such a thing as that he was carrying out the Act of 1902, he thought he would find it very difficult indeed to find anybody to believe him. The right hon. Gentleman might have made a mistake on some technical legal point and be excused, but he could not deny that he knew perfectly well what the spirit of the Act of 1902 was, and he did not carry it out. Then with regard to the training colleges, the right hon. Gentleman said that if they took public money they must conform to public conditions; but their complaint was that they were not public conditions but private. There never had been any opportunity given to the public to know them, and whether it was right or wrong that the training colleges should have a conscience clause, and should admit people who wanted undenominational teaching, what they complained of was the way in which this had been carried out. It had been done in a way calculated, and deliberately calculated, to make it almost impossible for the training colleges to carry out what was said to be the right hon. Gentleman's intention in the matter. The regulations were not submitted on the 15th May when the right hon. Gentleman told the House what he intended to do. It was not until very much later when the Estimates were being discussed that the regulations were before the House. His complaint was that the regulations were drawn up in such a way that instead of making it easy for the training colleges to adopt them it made it difficult. These regulations might very well have been discussed, and arrangements made by which everybody might have agreed to the principle, if they had been placed before the training colleges at an early date instead of being forced through the House at the end of the session. The right hon. Gentleman, when he spoke of the public contribution to these colleges, entirely omitted to take into consideration the fact that the country got a very great advantage from the money they paid to these colleges. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that the public conferred an enormous benefit on these institutions by contributing to their funds and did something towards forwarding the propaganda of the Church of England. But what the public did was to pay for the value they received in return. They paid for the teachers turned out of these colleges so equipped as to be qualified to teach in the public schools; and unless the teacher could satisfy them that he was so qualified they did not pay. They conferred no greater benefit on the training colleges than they could be said to confer on a shipbuilder or ordnance manufacturer when they paid for the goods they got. With regard to the £100,000 provided from the Appropriation Act of last year, he desired to point out that the right hon. Gentleman complained very much of any criticism upon this point, and said that if hon. Members would only put their particular cases before him he would give any information he could on those points. He himself had put down six rather lengthy Questions as to certain schools for to-morrow, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would fulfil his promise. He was not, however, very sanguine of obtaining answers, because when they asked what was to be the allocation of this £100,000, the right hon. Gentleman said he could not possibly say, and that they would only know at some date when it would be impossible to discuss it, because the whole thing would be over. To come and speak in the frank manner in which the right hon. Gentleman had done was simply an insult to the House after the answers he had given to Member's Questions a few days previously. With regard to the discussion in reference to the £100,000, both the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Minister for Education had said the House had had an ample opportunity to discuss the regulations. His recollection was that they had repeatedly asked for the regulations, and that they were eventually produced a few hours before the Second Reading of the Appropriation Bill, when it was quite impossible to see exactly what their bearing on the discussion might be, and the House were obliged to go back to the speech they had previously heard from the right hon. Gentleman to see what the spirit of these regulations was intended to be. The right hon. Gentleman's speech showed that the spirit of these regulations was to provide for the case where there was a single school area in which there were children who wished for religious teaching different from that provided by the school in that area. It seemed to him after consideration very doubtful whether the regulations were legal, because after the judgment of Mr. Justice Channell it was clear, and it was admitted in the Code, that the Board's decision was only to be final as to conditions not directly imposed by Act of Parliament. Under these regulations there were one or two conditions actually imposed by statute which the Board of Education proposed to over-rule if it wished to do so. But his complaint, if this information was correct, was that these regulations, whether legal or illegal, were not observed. He found that about £10,000 of the £100,000 was to be paid over to the school authorities of Denbighshire. That information was obtained from a leading lady on the education committee of Denbighshire who observed that Denbighshire was to get one-tenth of the grant. He had no objection to a large portion of this grant going to Wales, but Denbighshire was not one-tenth of the whole of Wales, and he would like to have some information with regard to that. If it was the fact that one-tenth was going to Denbighshire he would like to know what the reason was. He was also informed that in the case of Denbighshire, although objections had been lodged in every case, no inquiries had been held and the objectors had not been heard. He had also been told that the plans for these schools had been actually approved by the Board of Education before any inquiries had been held in the district to which they referred. He had no wish to exaggerate the points, but he put these questions and would like them to be answered. He had further heard that in Flintshire a school had been promised in an area which was not a single school area, and that in Denbighshire a grant had been promised without any contribution at all. He was further informed that in one case this grant had been promised, contrary to the regulations, to a school where the accommodation was deficient, and which, according to regulations, had to be excluded. He had put some Questions down for to-morrow and he asked if the Secretary to the Board of Education was unable, in his reply, to answer the questions he had put to him to-night, the right hon. Gentleman would fulfill his promise by giving detailed answers to the Questions on the Paper to-morrow. This was a most important Amendment, and he hoped his noble friend would press it to a division, because although one naturally expected legislation to have some party bias, the country was entitled to be defended from party bias in administration. It seemed to him that the more unpopular the Government became in the constituencies the more they resorted to these secret methods, and the more the right hon. Gentleman seemed to carry out his policy by administration and prevent the House from discussing his actions. So long as the Government carried this animus not only into their legislation but into administration, so long would they become more and more unpopular.

*MR. PERKS (Lincolnshire, Louth) said he had noticed that the late Colonial Secretary had made public a suggestion by some of his ecclesiastical friends that the training colleges — four-fifths of the cost of whose maintenance was provided by the State — should be allocated to different sects, and that the Nonconformists who found their way into sectarian training colleges should be turned into a sort of educational isolated camp called a hostel, and penned up in it, because they might find the atmosphere of a sectarian training college not agreeable to them, or because they might have some strange effect upon the morals or religious opinions of the members of the Church. This proposal was suggested as a sort of eirenicon in this educational controversy. All he would say was that it was so ludicrous, so opposed to Liberal opinion in the country, and so intolerant that it was only necessary to state it to find it at once rejected.

*MR. BOWLES (Lambeth, Norwood) said the President of the Board of Education had said in the course of his speech that he was prepared to answer any question as to the administration of his office that they in their criticism of that administration might think proper to put to him. He would like to put to him one question with regard to a matter with which he had not dealt in his speech, so far as he heard, and which seemed to him a matter of the greatest significance. He referred to the dealings of him and his office with the local education authority in Swansea, in reference to the differentiation made by that authority between the salaries paid to teachers of council schools and those paid to the teachers of voluntary schools.

MR. McKENNA: I said that I followed the same practice as was followed by the hon. Baronet opposite, and by my predecessor.

*MR. BOWLES said at any rate he had gathered that the right hon. Gentleman had suggested that he had no power to bring pressure to bear upon the local authority in order to influence them to deal fairly in this respect with the teachers of voluntary schools. When the right hon. Gentleman said he had no power he must have forgotten that it was provided by Section 7 of the Act of 1902 that all matters of dispute between the local education authorities and the managers were matters for him and him alone. He had power to decide, and, this specific dispute having arisen and been specially referred by the managers to the right hon. Gentleman more than twelve months ago, it was his duty to decide it. But, though repeatedly urged to do so, he had refused, or at any rate neglected to decide it, although both the power and the duty to do so were clearly laid upon him by statute.

MR. McKENNA: The decision was taken by the hon. Baronet opposite, and I have followed that decision. The principle on which I have gone is the same principle.

*MR. BOWLES said he had a letter written upon this very point by the right hon. Gentleman's predecessor. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman was also following the policy of his predecessor. This was the letter of the right hon. Gentleman who was now Chief Secretary for Ireland—

> "The Board of Education are not aware of any circumstances which would justify a differentiation in the salaries paid to teachers in voluntary and council schools. They feel that the present uncertainty is unjust to the teachers, and is gravely imperilling the efficiency of the schools. They trust therefore, to learn at an early date, that the authority will give their consent to the agreements prepared. In view of the provisions of Article 15 of the Code, the Board do not feel able to sanction payment of the grants for the National and York Place Schools, and they are assured that this matter has been satisfactorily arranged."

MR. McKENNA: My right hon. friend could do nothing after six months, and he had to follow, as I have had to follow, the decision of the hon. Baronet opposite.

*MR. BOWLES said that might or might not be so; he was given to understand that it was not so. His point was that the right hon. Gentleman had said that he had no power to deal with this matter, whereas as a matter of fact he had ample power to settle the whole dispute at once not only under the Act of 1902, but also by saying plainly to the local authority, as his predecessor had said, that there was no ground for discrimination, and that if they did not behave fairly the Board would not feel able to pay the grant. The action of the Government in regard to the £100,000 which had been taken had been referred to. Everybody knew what had happened. By Section 96 of the Act of 1870 it was provided in plain terms that no Parliamentary grant should be made in aid of building, enlarging or improving, or fitting up, any public elementary school. That plain, clear, statutory prohibition was in force last year and was still in force. Yet in spite of the prohibition the Government had decided, rightly or wrongly, he dared say rightly—he was not concerned about that—to spend a sum of £100,000 on this very purpose of building new public elementary schools. Now it was quite clear that, whether right or wrong, this was a very great and fundamental change of policy. It was impossible, consistently with any real Parliamentary control either of finance or of administration, to carry out great inherent changes of administration otherwise than by Bills and legislation. Why? He put it simply on the ground of the privileges of the House. Unless changes of administration were embodied in a Bill, the power of the House to discuss the change and to deal with it was really entirely given up and passed into the hands of the Department. What had happened here? The Government for no reason which they had advanced had chosen deliberately to adopt a principle entirely novel and to make, not by any Bill but simply by a new line in the Estimates of the year, considerable changes in administration, refraining from giving any details whatever which would enable anyone to know what the real meaning of the new grant was, how it was to be administered, and upon what principle it was to be allocated, merely saying in a short debate that they proposed to build new schools in the discretion of the right hon. Gentleman, and upon principles which, after he had got the money, he might tell them, but not before. It was not too much to say that not more than an hour and a half or two hours was devoted in the House even to the general point of policy; and all details which alone could make the policy intelligible were rigidly witheld. He wished to know the object of the Government in adopting this extraordinary course. Somebody, he believed below the Gangway, suggested that they were afraid of the House of Lords, that they were afraid if they had brought in a Bill in the ordinary way the House of Lords might have altered it in such a way as to make it unacceptable. It was very doubtful, the Bill being essentially of a financial character, whether the House of Lords would have dealt with it in the way the Government feared. But suppose it were so. Did the mere fact that the Government feared that the House of Lords would disagree with them on a certain policy justify them in setting aside the Constitution, in abrogating all the constitutional safeguards which ordinarily attach to changes of policy, and in reducing the functions of the House from real debate on the several stages of a Bill to a mere scratch conversation of a few hours on the Estimates? He submitted that it did not in any way. And if they were to understand that it was competent for the Government to make great administrative changes behind the back of, and without the consent of the House of Lords, what was the meaning of all the campaign and talk about the impossibility of doing anything in view of the existence of the House of Lords? The right hon. Gentleman really could not have it both ways. If they relied upon this new invention to carry out great changes without the House of Lords, well and good. He thought it was mischievous, and he did not think they could rely upon it; but if they did, they could not at the same time complain of the existence of the House of Lords making it impossible for them to carry out great administrative changes. But he did not believe that, in this matter, the Government was afraid of the House of Lords; he believed the Government was afraid of full and free discussion in the House of Commons, and he was not alone in that opinion. He wondered whether the right hon. Gentleman had noticed a very remarkable statement upon this very point by a noble Lord in another place, speaking as an old Parliamentarian, not without experience—a noble Lord who agreed with them on most matters, and who would not certainly be regarded as a particular friend of the voluntary school system—he meant Lord Stanley of Alderley. He said—

> "I associate myself with the criticisms of those who do not like this method of amending an Act of Parliament by means of the Appropriation Bill. I put it on the ground of Parliamentary practice. I feel that if we are to amend a clause in a general Act that has gone through Parliament with full discussion, it is only fair that the other House—it does not affect your Lordships' House, which is not concerned with money matters—should have the same full control by the power of debate at all stages. Therefore I, personally, regret the introduction of a practice which may constitute a very evil precedent in future years. In my opinion the course adopted is injurious to the efficiency of Parliamentary debate."

And what of the Government's own Law Officers? The late lamented and respected Attorney-General had used language of a very doubtful and hesitating character on this very point; and even the Lord Chancellor, though holding that this practice was not unconstitutional, yet said that he spoke on the subject with some misgiving, and relied, so far as precedent was concerned on the case of the resident magistrates. But that case, so far from confirming the Lord Chancellor's view, was, if words had any meaning, perfectly conclusive against it. Extracts had been read from Treasury Minutes, and from Reports of Public Accounts Committees over a series of years dealing with that case. The President of the Board of Education had suggested that what happened was that the Public Accounts Committee had reported against this practice of assuming to over-ride an Act of Parliament by a mere Vote in Supply and the Appropriation Act on the ground that the House of Commons might be taken by surprise. That was suggested on the first occasion, and very just it was, and if it applied then, it applied with especial force to the action of the Government of which they were now complaining. But after that first year there neither was nor could be any suggestion of objection to this practice on the mere ground of surprise. It was objected to throughout on the ground that it involved great constitutional and financial danger. This was a long story of the resident magistrates. It began in 1883. The Public Accounts Committee reported in that year, and there it was that they mentioned the danger of surprising the House of Commons. But the practice continued, and the Committee went on reporting. In 1885 they said—

> "Your Committee cannot accept the view in a legal, still less in financial, sense that the distinct terms of an Act of Parliament may be properly overridden by a Supplementary Estimate supported by the Appropriation Act. Your Committee trust that this matter, which is one of great importance from a constitutional point of view, will in the next Parliament be carefully examined."

Here was a Treasury Minute of 3rd November, 1885—

> "My Lords concur in the opinion of the Committee as to the danger both on financial and constitutional grounds of any general adoption of the view that the distinct terms of an Act of Parliament may be overridden by a subsequent Vote supported by the Appropriation Act."

There was nothing about surprise there. That was a solemn statement of the Treasury as to the financial danger and impropriety of this very practice.

MR. MCKENNA: They have left out the word "properly" in the Treasury Minute.

*MR. BOWLES said that of course anything could be done. He was only questioning whether it could properly be done.

MR. MCKENNA: The only reason given at any time was on the ground of surprise.

*MR. BOWLES begged the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. It was really impossible for the right hon. Gentleman to contend that in 1885, and right down to 1888, complaint of a practice begun in 1882 could be put upon the ground of surprise. There was no suggestion of surprise after the first Report in 1883. The right hon. Gentleman could not point to a single phrase in any one of these Reports or Minutes which would bear out his view. The thing was objected to throughout because it was unconstitutional and improper financially. Might he read one sentence from a letter which was addressed by the Treasury on this very point to every accounting officer in the service, in November, 1885?

> "I am desired by the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury to acquaint you that the Public Accounts Committees of the past and preceding sessions have upon more than one occasion noticed with disapproval cases where sums in excess of limits imposed by Acts of Parliament have been inserted in the Estimates and have subsequently been voted by Parliament and confirmed by the Appropriation Act. The Report of the Committee expresses disapproval of such a proceeding in distinct terms and recommends the matter to the consideration of the Public Accounts Committee in the next Parliament as one of great importance from a constitutional point of view. My Lords fully share in these views."

And, finally, in a letter to the Irish Chief Secretary dated 23rd January 1888, the Treasury declare that—

> "they can no longer defend the recurrence of the irregular charges before the Committee of Public Accounts, unless the requisite statutory authority is in course of being obtained during the coming session.

There was no question of surprise about that. They had it in black and white that in the view of the Public Accounts Committee and the Treasury of that day it was irregular and improper and had to be stopped as a practice to make payments in excess of the limits imposed by an Act of Parliament, even though that excess had been sanctioned by a Vote in Supply supported by the Appropriation Act of the year. He wanted to know whether the view of the Treasury upon that matter had altered. Were they to understand that it was the view of the Treasury now that the distinct terms of an Act of Parliament might properly be overridden by a Vote in Supply supported by the Appropriation Act of the year?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): Certainly. There is nothing unconstitutional in that—absolutely nothing. The propriety of it in any case must depend on the circumstances of the case.

*MR. BOWLES said the truth was as the Treasury had stated, that it was irregular and open to great financial and constitutional danger upon every ground.

The Treasury now did not care. The right hon. Gentleman did not. That, shortly, was what he wished thoroughly to understand. He understood that in the view of the Chancellor of the Exchequer this practice of spending money in defiance of the express provisions of existing Acts of Parliament, which were not to be repealed simply by passing a Vote in Supply and by supporting that Vote in the Appropriation Bill, was not only unconstitutional but he saw really no harm in it. He was prepared to defend it.

MR. ASQUITH: In this case.

*MR. BOWLES had no doubt in other cases too—in any case. If they were to understand that it was only in this case he should be glad to have an assurance.

MR. ASQUITH: I think I have made my meaning clear. It is not unconstitutional. The word "unconstitutional" does not apply to the situation. It is sanctioned by Act of Parliament, and whether it is politic or expedient is a totally different matter and must depend on the circumstances of the particular case.

*MR. BOWLES said it came to this, then: When it was politic or expedient in the view of the Government of the day this course might be adopted.

MR. ASQUITH: If sanctioned by this House.

*MR. BOWLES: Yes, in spite of what the Treasury said upon the exact point some years ago. He only wished to make that clear. He thought it was a matter of great importance to the House and the country; because if it was once admitted for a moment that the Government of the day could effect in this way great administrative changes prohibited by existing legislation, in nine cases out of ten there was no need in any matter for any legislation at all. Certainly there was no need for a new Education Act. He had looked through the Education Bill brought in by this Government in 1906 with some care, and he believed he was right in saying that every one of the changes in policy—and they were great—which that Bill sought to introduce, could be perfectly well effected under the dictum of the right hon. Gentleman representing the Treasury without any legislation and merely by altering the character of the Votes on the Estimates for the year, and supporting them by an Appropriation Bill. It was a tremendous change and for his part, being convinced that it was altogether a mischievous change, he wished to say no more than that he was obliged to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for having made his view on the matter clear, and that he would be very much surprised if any real or reasoned defence of this new principle of finance would be made in either House by any competent financial authority.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): I am rather surprised that the right hon. Gentleman should have given us so little information in regard to the expenditure of this money. I think my hon. friend the Member for Norwood has shown conclusively that this expenditure has been in defiance of the rules laid down by the Public Accounts Committee. The voting of this £100,000 may be perfectly constitutional, but it has been voted in the teeth of an Act of Parliament. There are two Acts affecting this queston, one which says by reason of this money being voted it may be spent, and the other says it cannot be voted or cannot be spent. I want to know what is being done at the present moment. The Act of 1870 which permits the expenditure of money on school buildings is disregarded. I the regulations the Act of 1902 is specifically mentioned. The three governing conditions are: (1) That there should be public notice of the intention to erect these schools; (2) that the local managers may appeal; and (3) that a certain number of ratepayers are entitled to submit their views to the Board. Are those conditions being fulfilled now?

MR. McKENNA: I hope so.

LORD BALCARRES: Will the right hon. Gentleman tell us in how many cases notice has been given? Will he tell us in what form the local managers are entitled to lay their views before the Board of Education? The regulations, as the right hon. Gentleman knows, are to all intents and purposes simply the centralising of all power to deal with these questions, and they say that there must be adequate provision. They declare that the building must be distinct and so on, but they do not lay down any system or method upon which the Board is to act. But Clause 9 of the Act of 1902 does so. It says that in settling these cases the Board has to decide, taking into account the economy of the rates and also the interests of secular instruction and the wishes of the parents. I do not see how the economy of the rates is to apply, because we understand that these schools are going to be erected partly from the rates and partly from the grants, and in some cases entirely from the grants. Consequently there is a certain amount of ambiguity as to the actual effect upon the rates. How is the right hon. Gentleman going to decide these questions taking into account the interests of secular instruction? Section 9 says that the Board of Education has to have regard to the interests of secular instruction, but this money is not granted upon any question arising from secular instruction. These are single school areas, and nobody objects to them on secular grounds, because some of the single school areas are most excellent. The objection in this case is that they are single school areas from a religious point of view. I want to know how he is going to determine this question in the interests of secular instruction, in view of the fact that the interests of secular instruction do not arise. And lastly, how is the third consideration to be arrived at, viz., the wishes of the parents? What is being done by the Board in this respect, because these bald regulations carry one no distance at all. The right hon. Gentleman has been asked this session six or eight Questions on the subject, and he has refused to answer them all with one exception. I am not quite clear what he said in reply to that Question, but I think his statement was that there would be no inquiry.

Mr. McKENNA: I said there would be no inquiry by the Local Government Board unless a loan was sought to be raised by the local authority.

Lord BALCARRES: I understood the reply was that there would be no inquiry by the Board of Education. I want to know if the Board of Education will hold an inquiry before the building of these schools.

Mr. McKENNA: If it is necessary.

Lord BALCARRES: How will you ascertain where it is necessary to build schools without a public inquiry? Where questions of this kind are so simple and direct it would be a great convenience if the right hon. Gentleman would in future answer them across the floor of the House.

Mr. McKENNA: Yes, I would do so, but those were not the questions put to me to-day.

Lord BALCARRES: Then I understand there is to be no inquiry by the Local Government Board, unless some question of loan arises. The holding of a public inquiry with regard to ascertaining the wishes of the parents and the interests of secular education will not be held, unless the Board of Education consider it needful, and that will depend upon the right hon. Gentleman and his advisors. I think such an inquiry is necessary, for I do not think you ought to trust canvassers to give an accurate statement as to the wishes of the parents. The right hon. Gentleman may think that that is an adequate form of making an inquiry, but I think it is much better to be open and above board and have a public inquiry frankly. The local authorities have already received very largely signed memorials from persons who are opposed to these schools, and without a public inquiry they cannot hope their case will receive proper consideration. Unless such an inquiry is held the right hon. Gentleman will be contravening the Statute of 1902. The Chancellor of the Exchequer very boldly stated that no Court could question this. A few months ago the Minister for Education told us he had complete assurance that as far as he knew this Garforth case the local authority had acted correctly, but Mr. Justice Channell's judgment has destroyed that view. The real thing we want to know is what is actually being done now. We are told that land is actually being purchased on the strength of some grant which is being guaranteed from the £100,000 before the requisite three months' notice has been allowed to elapse. It has been said that larger schools are being planned than is necessary. That again seems to me, if true, to be inconsistent with the regulations of the right hon. Gentleman. Regulation No. 9 says that new schools cannot be erected in order to make places where the provision of places would become incumbent upon the local education authority. You cannot have a building grant under this £100,000 to supply places which in the ordinary course of educational development will become necessary. That seems all right, but it is inconsistent with the Act of 1902, which the right hon. Gentleman admits is binding. There again you come back to this conclusion, that the erection of a council school does not justify the removal of children from a neighbouring council school. The right hon. Gentleman is very confident about this scheme, but I think he ought to tell us what is being done. The reply he has given is that he will tell us at the end of the financial year. I would remind him that department after department give information of matters up to date. I know there are dozens of cases where the right hon. Gentleman has given an undertaking that a certain sum of money shall be expended in a particular parish, and why is the House of Commons refused information in regard to those parishes? Several of my hon. friends have put questions to the Secretary of State for War as to how the numbers in the Army compare with a couple of years ago, and the right hon. Gentleman has given an answer up to date. The right hon. Gentleman could very well give us the figures up to date, but he says he cannot tell us anything. I think there is no reason for declining the information, but of course we shall have to bow to his answer. He declines to give it for two months after it is required. The right hon. Gentleman has spoken of the legality of his proceedings, but I am bound to say that this system of erecting schools out of money granted by this House is not going to last. It was condemned by all educationists thirty years ago when the great Education Act was passed. I believe it was the unanimous verdict of the House then that the system should cease. Of course, this £100,000 represents but a small fraction of the money the Treasury has to find in this matter. I am perfectly certain that the system cannot last, because it is unjust towards many of the localities themselves. The system is bound to create friction between one parish and another. It is bound to cause jealousy, charges of favouritism, and so on. Apart from these considerations there is the fact that if this system is sincerely, logically, and impartially carried out it will cost the country millions of money. The principle of the Act of 1871 is that which should be followed. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will be persuaded, at any rate, to take the public into his confidence so far as to tell us what has been done. He could give such information at Question-time as will guide the public outside as to his intentions with regard to the regulations of the Board of Education.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said there were many points on which he differed from the President of the Board of Education, but he did not think that the speeches delivered by the proposer and the supporters of the Amendment were at all calculated to serve the cause which the hon. Members had at heart. The noble Lord dropped a regretful tear over the administration of the late President of the Board of Education. It was only now that they had discovered that he was disposed to be good to the voluntary schools of England. But when he was in office how were his intentions met? It was true now that Birrellism and Birrelligion had been routed, but he did not know that they were altogether pleased. He could not help thinking that this must have been a pleasant evening for the Chief Secretary for Ireland. The great ambition then of the champions of the voluntary schools of England was to get rid of him. Well, they succeeded in that ambition, and now they found themselves in a worse position. Bitter complaints were made against the present President of the Board of Education. It was declared over and over again that since he came into office a new spirit had been displayed in the administration of the Board of Education. The noble Lord complained bitterly that he sought to achieve his objects by administration and not by legislation. That was made a great grievance of. But why was he seeking to achieve his objects by administration? Did not the Liberal Government attempt legislation in this matter, and was it to be wondered at that when the confederates of the noble Lord in another place defeated the wish of the people as represented in this House, the Minister should seek to achieve his objects by means of administration? He thought it was a naïve accusation on the part of the noble Lord. Would not his Party have made the same attempt, or more, if they had had, like the Party now in power, in the first year of their Parliament a fresh mandate from the people upon this particular subject? And let it be remembered that in their attempt to carry out that mandate they offered concessions and compromises which he only hoped and prayed they might get another opportunity of accepting. He held that for political purposes and not in the interests of the voluntary schools that offer of compromise was rejected. The best hope now, he thought, for these schools was that they might get another similar chance. The House of Lords killed the Bill of 1906, and that was the reason why the present Ministry were endeavouring to achieve their object by administration. If the noble Lord and his friends and allies in another place thought when they succeeded in defeating the will of this House that that defeat would be taken lying down by hon. Members opposite, all he could say was that they made, as they were now finding out, a very great mistake. He thought public opinion would hold that he was a far better friend of the voluntary schools than the noble Lord and his friends. As he said already, they were done with Birrellism and Birrelligion, but now they were in a worse position than ever, and he felt the best service that he could render to the cause of these schools was in a few sentences to recall the attention of hon. Members to the history of the subject. He had noticed this remarkable fact, that the chief burthen of the speeches of hon. Gentlemen above the gangway to-night was an attack upon the local education authorities. That was their chief complaint. No doubt it was an attack upon the Board of Education for non-coercing them and overruling them, but in most of the cases brought forward the grievance was against the local education authority. Who created the local education authorities? The Act of 1902. He as a friend of the voluntary schools took occasion during those debates to warn the Government of the day that in handing over the voluntary schools to the local authorities, as created by that Bill, they were entering upon a very dangerous experiment. The old school boards were denounced by members of the Tory Party in very violent terms. He was doubtful then, and he was still more doubtful now, whether the Catholic schools were not better off under the old school board system, but when he warned the Government then in power of the danger of these new local authorities, what was the answer he received? He was told that was all futile and absurd. The Board of Education, it was said, would overrule the local authorities if they oppresesd the voluntary schools. He then took leave to say that the time might arrive when the Radical Party would get into power, and he was called a Jeremiah, told that he was a prophet of evil, and that that terrible time would never arise. It had arisen, to the great dismay of the Tory Party, and now there was a Government in sympathy with the local authorities. Then these gentlemen appeared to be amazed that the Government were slow to overrule the local authorities. That was exactly what he foresaw, and that was what had happened. They created the local authorities, and they relied on the Board of Education to overrule them. There were many local authorities in the West Riding of Yorkshire and other parts of the country which had, as he thought, oppressed the voluntary schools. Now by a turn of fortune's wheel the Tory Party were in a hopeless minority and the Radical Party in a majority, and they thought they were going to remedy this state of things by speeches such as they had listened to to-night. He did not think they were going to remedy it; he thought they were going to make it a great deal worse. Did hon. Members recall to mind, when making these violent attacks upon the present Liberal Party, which he was bound to say had a much larger majority at their back than the Tory Party had in 1902—did they remember the appeals made from these benches for concessions and compromise and how they were met? He remembered in the face of storms of obliquy from those benches, and from the organs in the Press of his own Church, and of denunciation by his own bishops, that he made an appeal that some modest concessions should be made to the Nonconformists of this country? The Leader of the Tory Party denounced him as betraying the interests of the voluntary schools. How wise the champions of those schools would have been to remember when they were in power that a day might come when the other Party would be in power! [OPPOSITION cries of "No."] Yes; did they think of justice when they were in power, and when appeals were made to them by the right hon. Gentleman, now President of the Board of Trade, for some concessions to the Nonconformists of the country? That right hon. Gentleman and his friends were trampled upon and insulted, and told that they would not be listened to. The Tory Party had found out their mistake since. What was the appeal which he had himself made and for which he was denounced, not only by the Tory Party, but by all the authorities of his own Church? That appeal was to the right of the parent, and he was sneered and laughed at. What cared they for the right of the parent compared with the right of the trustees? Now the leaders of the Church of England were grounding their whole case on the right of the parent. Why did they not think of the right of the parent five years ago when they were in power? They could then have made a compromise regarding the voluntary schools which would have lasted for the next thirty years. Even the Archbishop of Canterbury was now enthusiastic for the right of the parent, but when he advocated it, he and the Catholic bishops and the *Tablet* newspaper in an article four columns long denounced him, although they would now be very glad if the proposal he then made and the terms he suggested could be obtained. Was there no lesson to be learned from that? If there was to be perpetual war and no compromise, did anyone in the House doubt where it would all end? He appealed to those who wished to preserve any form of teaching the Christian religion in schools. He knew that there were many religious men, with as deep religious convictions as his own, who believed that the best thing would be that there should be no religion taught in schools at all. He asked the Liberal Party who now sat in power if no lesson was to be learned from the history of the Tory Party, who, having power in their hands in 1902, grossly misused it, and were now suffering the consequences, and were appealing to their opponents for mercy and justice. If this question was to be fought out on lines of mutual recrimination and irreconcilable war, how could it end? It could only end one way, in the elimination of religion from the schools altogether. There was no other issue possible. He wished to say a word of warning to the Liberal Government and the Liberal Party. If now that they were in power they put oppression on the consciences of English Churchmen and Catholics by an Education Bill, or by administrative acts, they might get a temporary triumph but no settlement. On this question of conscience there was no settlement possible, except along the lines of general toleration. They might win now, but the Tory Party would come into power again, and would undo the Liberal settlement; and unless there was some agreement the cause of Liberalism and progress would be wounded and hurt, and in the end there would be no other termination than that religion would be driven from the schools, and they would not get even simple Bible teaching. He had read every line that had been written and spoken on this question and would say that of all the hopeless tasks ever entered upon, or hopeless idea ever aimed at by a political party, the most hopeless was that the schools of the country should be supported by public money, and that only that form of religious teaching approved by the majority of the people should be given, although objected to by those in the minority. They must have a general concordat and agreement to meet the religious feeling and consciences of the minority. Returning to the course of the debate, he did not see that the speeches delivered from the Opposition benches were calculated to forward the cause of any settlement of this great question. They were calculated rather to rouse passions, to irritate feelings, and to promote discord. The noble Lord the Member for Marylebone had a very meek and light way of making charges. His Lordship said that he would make no charges, and then he proceeded to say that the President of the Board of Education was cursed in Wales—a statement of a most disgraceful character. The President of the Board of Education was there to defend himself, but the noble Lord had made a charge against an official of corruption of the grossest character. That official was not present, and such a charge ought not to have been made He did not see that any particular advantage was to be gained by making charges in that way. He would follow the example of the noble Lord. He made no charge, but it was commonly said that the noble Lord and many of his colleagues were playing with this question and were animated by a desire not to protect and save the denominational schools of the country, but to use them as a pawn in the Tory game.

LORD EDMUND TALBOT (Sussex, Chichester): I do not find myself in agreement with some parts of the speech of the hon. Member for East Mayo, but I do most heartily concur in the appeal he made to hon. Gentlemen opposite to treat the question of education in a more conciliatory spirit than they have done recently. [AN HON. MEMBER on the MINISTERIAL BENCHES: "The appeal was made to you, and to your friends."] I rise only to call attention to the regulations with reference to secondary education, and the grants which were given for that purpose. These grants are voted by this House, but the House has very little voice as to how they have to be allocated. The President of the Board of Education takes to himself the power as to how these grants should go. It is true that in a sense he consults the local authority, but by doing so it appears to me that he puts the local authority in a very unpleasant position. First of all, the money is not theirs. It is not rate money, and they have nothing whatever to do with it; but the burden is placed upon them of having to come to a decision as to what school should, in their opinion, be eligible for the higher grant. The right hon. Gentleman reserves to himself the right to refuse to carry out the wishes of the local authority. I speak with some feeling on this point and for the same reason as was advanced by the hon. Member for South Kerry in the case of the Southampton school. Catholic schools have suffered by the decision of the right hon. Gentleman. Another case is that of Bury, in Lancashire, which, however, is not so strong as that of Southampton. I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that the Catholics in this country feel this treatment very seriously and bitterly, and resent it very much. If the burden of passing a Resolution is imposed on the local education authorities it is very hard treatment that that Resolution should be vetoed at the fancy and will of the President of the Board of Education. I wish not to say anything with regard to the training colleges except this. I wish to remind the right hon. Gentleman and the Government of what they know already, because they have been sufficiently informed of it, that if circumstances should occur by which these new regulations should come into collision with the principles on which our Catholic training colleges are conducted, we cannot in conscience accept them.

*MR. CHAPLIN (Surrey, Wimbledon): I think I owe an apology to the House for intruding for a moment in the debate on a question with which I frankly own I am less familiar than some others. But in the early part of his speech, I heard the President of the Board of Education, while he complained of vague charges being made against him, say he was always glad to give his careful attention and consideration to individual cases, where hardship and suffering had been caused. It is to one of those cases of hardship that I propose to call his attention to-night, and it may afford an illustration of the methods which have been complained of on the part of the Board of Education in the course of this debate. It is the case of the Ursuline Convent School, which is situated in the constituency which I now represent. In the case of that school there was an application so long ago as April, 1906, for recognition under the existing regulations as a secondary school. In response to that application, the Board of Education sent down an inspector during the same month, and that inspector suggested to the authorities of the school, that they should make a formal application to be recognised as a secondary school eligible for a grant, and, meanwhile, I suppose with a view of giving them greater hopes of succeeding in getting that grant, that they should make certain strucutral alterations in their building. They accepted his advice and they applied. In due course a form of application was sent to them, which was filled up and duly returned. No answer of any sort or kind was returned to these people until at least thirteen months afterwards. That is the first cause of their complaint. In the meantime, getting no answer whatever and having waited for a reply until the following Christmas—foolishly perhaps, but not unnaturally, in view of the advice, or suggestion rather, that had been made to them by the inspector, they proceeded to carry out and effect the improvements which had been suggested to them, assuming, I suppose, that in this case silence gave consent. Having done that, they heard nothing further whatever from the Board of Education until 25th April, 1907, more than a year after they had made their application. At that time they received a letter from the Board of Education to this effect: that a definite answer to their application for recognition could not be given until certain matters of principle had been decided, those principles being laid down under Section 1 of the prefatory memorandum of the regulations for secondary schools in the year 1906. No definite answer to their application was received by the 31st July, 1907, that being the date, and this is rather important, at which the existing regulations expired. On 6th August, they were informed that they could not be recognised until they had complied with the new regulations for 1907–8. Further correspondence took place between the Board of Education and the authorities of the school as to the expense to which the latter had been put. The general result of all this correspondence was this: The expense, which they expected to recover by the grant, which they had, more or less, been led to hope they might obtain was objected to, but in spite of all that had passed they were definitely refused recognition. Their complaint is, and I am bound to say there is a great deal of justice and a great deal of hardship connected with it, that their first application in 1906 was held over for no less than thirteen months, until it was no longer of any valid force whatever and until the new regulations had been published, laying down obligations with which it was impossible for any denominational school to agree to, and when, under the suggestion of the Board's own inspector, they had incurred expense in the full belief that they would be recouped by the grant. That is a case which I have felt myself justified in presenting to this House and to the President of the Board of Education for his attentive and careful consideration. I am sorry that the President is absent, but he is admirably represented, and I hope I may have some reply to the complaint which I have made.

*MR. EVELYN CECIL (Aston Manor) did not think that the speech which they had heard from the hon. Member for East Mayo ought to go entirely unanswered from those Benches. It was a characteristic speech, imaginative, cynical, sneering, recriminative, and lecturing (AN HON. MEMBER: "It was true"] and at any rate there was one hon. Member who was prepared to take it as true. It was quite true that all these epithets applied to it, but beyond that he was not prepared to go. That speech charged them deliberately—he took the words down—

with having for their motive in all these educational debates, that they were merely a pawn in the Tory game.

MR. DILLON stated that in what he had said he had followed the words of the noble Lord when he stated that he made no charge but that it was commonly said.

*MR. EVELYN CECIL said he was glad to hear that remark and that the hon. Gentleman did not make that formidable indictment, because otherwise he should be tempted to retort that the speech of the hon. Member might have been commonly said to be a pawn in the Home Rule game. To come more directly to the question they were discussing, he did not think the President of the Board of Education was reasoning correctly when he took shelter behind the Appropriation Act of last year, to save himself from the charge that the regulations which had been issued were matters for legislation and not administration. The right hon. Gentleman said in reply that he was whitewashed because the sums to which reference had been made were passed in the Appropriation Act. He submitted however, that the regulations were subjects which were altogether outside the direct control of Parliament, because these regulations could be put into force by the Board of Education whether there was an Appropriation Act or not. Supposing the Board of Education thought fit to issue these or any other regulations or let them say one discharging every official under them who did not happen to be a Nonconformist, that could be done without the authority of Parliament and without any Appropriation Act at all. He contended that the regulations they were now discussing were exactly in the same position. Therefore it was not accurate for the right hon. Gentleman to say that the Appropriation Act whitewashed him in regard to his action. Going a stage further the grants of the Board of Education had always been given on the ground of educational efficiency, and the Board had confined itself entirely to the administration of Statute Law. But what was happening now? If the right hon. Gentleman looked at Section 4 of the Act of 1902 he would see that the whole intention of the Act and of that section in particular, was that there should be no special religious requirements by the local education authorities as regarded higher education. It was perfectly plain that the intention of the Act was that the local education authority should not impose religious restrictions. The right hon. Gentleman had said that the local education authority ought to act in the spirit of the regulations of the Board of Education. He ventured to think that the right hon. Gentleman himself ought equally to act in the spirit of the law of the land, and, when it was plain that the law he was administering did not contemplate that any religious restrictions should be imposed, it was not right that those regulations should have been introduced and put into force in the way they had been by the right hon. Gentleman. It was altogether a perversion of his office. He was not there to make fresh laws in his administrative capacity. He was put there to administer the law, and that was what they said he had not done in a proper spirit.

MR. McKENNA: In what way?

*MR. EVELYN CECIL: Because the right hon. Gentleman has put these restrictions into force which are not in the spirit of the law of the land he is administering.

MR. McKENNA: Section 4 deals with the provision of rate aid to the school. My regulations have nothing whatever to do with rate aid. They deal with grants only.

*MR. EVELYN CECIL replied that the spirit was the same, and it was merely, he would not say a quibble, but a side issue to tell him that the Act happened to refer to rate-aid while the new regulations did not. So long as the law remained what it was, the right hon. Gentleman should not have done as he had done. The right hon. Gentleman did it in a somewhat unusual way, because although it was true that there was a debate on the 15th of May when his regulations were foreshadowed by him, it was also true to say that except for himself and his colleagues there was not a man in the House who had then any idea of what the regulations did really foreshadow. It was not until the end of the session.

MR. McKENNA: If the hon. Member will pardon me, the Estimates were discussed on the 11th of July, and the regulations were circulated before that day, that is to say, the regulations referring to the secondary schools and the training colleges.

*MR. EVELYN CECIL: I of course accept the date from the right hon. Gentleman, but my impression certainly was that there had been no debate.

MR. McKENNA: Debated in this House on 11th July.

*MR. EVELYN CECIL: But not with these regulations before us.

MR. McKENNA: Absolutely.

*MR. EVELYN CECIL: I am not sure what regulations the right hon. Gentleman is referring to.

MR. McKENNA: I am referring to the secondary schools regulation.

*MR. EVELYN CECIL said in that case he withdrew, although he had been under the impression that they were not discussed. He was, however, of opinion that owing to their highly controversial character it would have been right to have given fuller notice than by a short debate in the last few weeks of the session when the scope and far-reaching nature of the proposals had not been adequately gauged. The right hon. Gentleman was quite aware that the two Parties were constantly changing sides and their position would not always be as it was now. Others would be called upon to administer these regulations and if highly controversial regulations were made in the way they had been made on this occasion he was quite certain that the next time the elections reversed the majority in this House these regulations would be reversed also. It was a bad precedent to adopt. They preferred from the non-party point of view the continuation of policy. Hitherto, it had always been the desire of the Party in power to go on with the law their predecessors had passed, but from this time that would not be so, and it was on these grounds, quite as much as on the grounds upon which he felt so strongly opposed to the regulations themselves, that he rose to support the Amendment that so well expressed his views.

MR. RAWLINSON (Cambridge University) said the charge against the Government for which the right hon. Gentleman spoke was that they had used the powers given to them for the purposes of administration, for exercising *quasi*-judicial functions for the purpose of introducing reforms which the political party they represented deemed to be desirable, and which this House might or might not deem desirable. The hon. Member for East Mayo, as the candid friend of the Government, explained that it was their object to achieve by the exercise of their administrative functions what they had failed to gain by legislation. Was that in accordance with the traditional principles of administration in his country? When a change was desired, a change which the Government had failed to carry out by means of legislation, were hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite justified in carrying it out by powers given to them for the purposes of administration and *quasi*-judicial functions? It must indeed be gratifying to the Government to receive the patronage the hon. Member for East Mayo had given them. It must be gratifying to the Chief Secretary for Ireland to receive the patronage he had received from such allies.

MR. DILLON: It was the noble Lord who shed a regretful tear over the Secretary for Ireland.

MR. RAWLINSON said he did not think his noble friend's patronage of the two right hon. Gentlemen was so distinguished as that of the hon. Member for East Mayo. Such patronage must present some humour to the onlooker, because when they remembered the feelings that existed on the Benches blow the gangway last year, it said a great deal for the patronage extended by the hon. Member for East Mayo this evening. There was also a certain amount of humour in the fact that the right hon. Gentleman, who had been representing the Nonconformists of Wales and the passive resisters of England, should have this benevolent patronage from the Roman Catholic faction in Ireland.

MR. DILLON: Faction! Thank you. Very much obliged!

MR. RAWLINSON thought the hon. Member should see at once that that was a slip. He meant, of course, the adherents of the Roman Catholic religion. The hon. Member had told them that he was an advocate of the parents' rights two years ago. Why had he not advocated them that night?

MR. DILLON: I have.

MR. RAWLINSON said they had seen very little of it. He was grateful, at least, that the hon. Member had not accused them of using the question of these rights as a pawn in the political game. The reason he did not make that charge was because he knew that if he had done so it would have been untrue. He would now deal very briefly with the first case quoted against the right hon. Gentleman the point of which he appeared to have missed—the Garforth case. In Garforth there was an old established voluntary school, complete in all its departments. There was also a temporary school in the village for some time. Eventually the temporary school was superseded by a local education authority school. The right hon. Gentleman had told the House that that school was built specially for the elder children, though why, he (Mr. Rawlinson) could not conceive. The local education authority then brought forward a scheme which would not commend itself to this House, quite apart from any legal technicalities, providing that nobody should attend the church school after grades 1, 2 and 3, but that grades 4, 5 and 6 should go to the education authority school. The effect of that would be to turn the Church school into an infant school. The managers would not consent to this, and the matter came before the Board of Education. The right hon. Gentleman said quite rightly that all that could be done there was to take the best legal decision possible. That was done, and on 1st June a decision was given to the effect that in the absence of the consent of the managers the Board of Education could not and would not sanction that scheme of reorganisation. After an extra appeal had been made, the Board of Education wrote again, apparently, of course, after having taken the best legal advise, saying that they saw no reason to alter their decision, and that the scheme of reorganisation could not be carried out so long as the managers objected to it at all. The matter ended there so far as the managers were concerned, and on 3rd July, no communication having been made to the managers in the interval, a letter was sent down stating that the President of the Board of Education had come to the conclusion that an order should be made, and a reversal of the decision of 3rd June was made on 12th July. What was the reason which arose between those dates for the change which appeared to the permanent officials of the Board of Education on 3rd and 20th June impossible and improper to be carried through? What happened to make the Board of Education come to a diametrically opposite conclusion and make an exceedingly unfair order, an order which closed the school as a complete school and left it a truncated and little better than an infant school? That was what needed explanation. What had occurred between those two letters? So far as the public knew, the only thing was some suggestion of a deputation from the local education authority. There was certainly nothing on the part of the managers. There was no communication either to or from the managers. That was the story of the Garforth School; and it was one which he submitted any impartial tribunal would scrutinise very carefully. When they bore in mind that it was the admitted duty of the Board of Education to maintain a school with proper conditions as they found it, whether they liked the religious teaching in it or not, and when they found them passing an order contrary to the opinion of their own permanent officials, expressed twice, and contrary to the justice and the rights of the case and which ruined the school, he ventured to submit that every fair-minded man would say it called for more explanation than the right hon. Gentleman had given. So far as the training colleges were concerned, the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "If you take public money you must take it upon public conditions."

He was prepared to agree with that statement, but who were to enforce these conditions? The whole point of the Amendment and gravamen of the charge was that the conditions were to be enforced by Parliament and not merely by the head of an administrative Department. Having failed to get Part II. of the Education Bill of 1906, the Government had got something similar by the pen and judgment of the right hon. Gentleman. He had made the conditions. He (Mr. Rawlinson) would not stop to argue whether those conditions were in his opinion fair or good. What he protested against was that an administration of a public department should have that power and exercise it in the way it had been exercised. He had differed very much from what the hon. Member for East Mayo had said in various matters, but he agreed very strongly with him when he said they must look on the reverse side of these matters. Assuming that the present Government passed out of office and another Government came into power, what he said would apply equally strongly. Somebody might succeed the right hon. Gentleman with extreme Church of England views. Would it be in accordance with the traditional principles of administration for him, whoever he was, to make conditions which he had failed to carry through the House of Parliament vastly in favour of Church of England schools and vastly detrimental to other schools? The proposition had only to be stated to show how absolutely unjust and unconstitutional such a procedure was. Yet it had been followed in this case. There was one other matter he had to deal with, and that was the question of the grant of £100,000 for building new schools. It was absolutely wrong that any Minister should have in his power without any Parliamentary control at all, the administration of such a large sum of money. He might perfectly well administer it in his own constituency if he chose. The argument would be equally strong if the party to which he belonged were in power. It would be a most improper state of affairs. It had never been done before, and it was an objectionable innovation that the Minister of Education should have in his hands a large sum of money which he could dole out possibly to Church of England schools without reference to Parliament. It was upon this point that the Amendment was moved regretting that the action of the Board of Education recently had not been in accordance with the traditional principles of administration in this country. He would not detain the House with other matters he might wish to deal with. He agreed that certain matters of detail should be dealt with on the Estimates rather than on such an occasion as this. Speaking broadly, he asked the House to say that the Government were using their powers of administration in a *quasi*-judicial position for the purpose of introducing reforms which might be good or bad but which were not in accordance with the powers given to them, and to say that it did not approve of it.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. LOUGH, Islington, W.): There was one remark made by the hon. Member who has just sat down with which I am sure everyone will agree, and that is that many of the details which have been raised to-night might be more appropriately dealt with in the Estimates. I want out of courtesy to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wimbledon to endeavour to give him an answer on the precise point he has raised. He is a sufficiently experienced Member of this House to know the difficulty we are in. He has not given us any notice that he would raise this precise point. It is a very detailed and difficult point to deal with, but I can assure the right hon. Gentleman we have made a careful note of what he has said about the matter, and at a very early time I will endeavour to satisfy him.

*Mr. CHAPLIN: If you will allow me I will send you particulars.

Mr. LOUGH: I am quite sure the right hon. Gentleman will be satisfied with that. I might now humbly appeal to hon. Gentlemen opposite to allow the House to come to a decision on the Motion. I cannot help, as I am on my feet, although I consider it a sin to prolong the debate, making one or two observations. I have been sitting here six hours, and we do not seem to have made much progress. I cannot help saying that I think my right hon. friend has been very unfairly dealt with. My right hon. friend was willing and anxious to answer every charge that might be brought against him. We have had a most languid debate. We have had very few points put, and, if I except the speech of the hon. Member the noble Lord for Marylebone, those points were not put with any particular clearness. Then my right hon. friend, after looking round to see if everybody had said everything they had to say, stood up and made a reply. That was about ten minutes past five. My right hon. friend answered in the most detailed and courteous manner every point raised, and I venture to say the answer he gave appealed to the sense of the majority of the House. Immediately he sat down every point of the most trivial character was mentioned again, and so the debate has dragged on. May I just take an illustration or two? There was the case of Swansea. There could not be a case in which, if my assurance will be accepted—and I give it in perfect good faith—my right hon. friend could have been more unjustly treated with regard to his handling of the matter. What are the facts which have come out? It is an old and troublesome affair.

*Sir WILLIAM ANSON: The matter was only raised by the managers about eight months before I went out of office, and I left it in a condition for my successor to take immediate action.

Mr. LOUGH: Very well. Eight months before the hon. Baronet went out of office. My right hon. friend has assured the House that he dealt with it in exactly the same spirit as the hon. Baronet opposite. My right hon. friend who is now Chief Secretary for Ireland did all he could to settle it. What is the one argument that has been used? My right hon. friend has been told that he coerced the local authorities, especially if they were Radical local authorities. Could anything be more foolish? It is always more difficult to satisfy the claims of your friends than it is to deal with your opponents. Let me put an end to the matter. The matter has been amicably settled some months ago. The managers are thoroughly satisfied, the local authority is satisfied, the onlookers, the public in Swansea, are satisfied, and yet that has been the subject of our debate in this House. The case of Merioneth, another troublesome case in the same troublesome country—I know these things, because I have had experience of them. The case was settled quite six or eight months ago. It was forgotten practically until it was raised again in this debate. I will not go into the third case mentioned, but it is of exactly the same character. What I plead with the House to consider is this. If there was any genuine charge to be made against my right hon. friend, would hon. Members opposite be driven to drag out these three wretched cases? If the whole spirit of the administration is so bad, and that is what the Amendment declares, would it not be possible to bring up other cases than these three which have been referred to *ad nauseam*? The hon. Member for Aston made quite a long speech on the point that the regulations were not delivered until a few days before Parliament separated. I have made inquiries, and I find that the regulations relating to secondary schools were delivered on 1st July, and the regulations relating to training colleges were delivered on 4th July, and all the matters connected with both were fully discussed in the last session of Parliament. I am forced to the conclusion that these little points which I have been mentioning were only a pretext, and that the real feeling in the minds of hon.

Gentlemen opposite, if they would only say it and make their case upon it, is about some other matter with regard to my right hon. friend. That has come out too, but we have had the greatest difficulty really in discovering what it was. What was the real charge? It was just this, that my right hon. friend broke away from the traditional administration of the Board of Education by passing regulations which were aimed at giving an efficient and effective conscience clause to training colleges. That is the whole case, nothing more. All these absurd attacks are based on that single point. Hon. Members opposite cannot forgive him for taking that single step. What has come out with regard to that? He has pursued the exact traditional policy in every step he has taken. The whole matter is confined to the one point. What did the hon. Baronet opposite do? He introduced a conscience clause for day pupils in all secondary schools. What is the offence of my right hon. friend? He applied the same conscience clause of the hon. Baronet opposite to boarders. Where is there any difference in principle between the two things? If it is good for day pupils, it is good for boarders also. It is an evidence of the fact that gentlemen opposite will not accept from my right hon. friend what they would have to put up with from their own leaders if they were in office. The conscience clause of 1903–4 differs in no material respect from that introduced by my right hon. friend. There is one other point in dealing with secondary schools which has come out, and I cannot help bringing a little incident to the notice of the House in connection with it. The second point in the treatment of the secondary schools by my right hon. friend is that he has insisted on a certain amount of local control. He has introduced the local authorities as one of the controlling powers in connection with the schools. This was done because there was a great increase in the amount of public money given. Will any Gentleman on this side of the House, or even Gentlemen opposite, in their cooler moments say that the large additional grants for secondary schools which my right hon. friend obtained from the Chancellor of the Exchequer could be distributed in these days without allowing the local authorities some voice in the matter? That is the second ground of attack, and it is in connection with that that I want to recall to the House a little incident that happened about a week ago. There has been another great authority in connection with education, one of the great opponents of my right hon. friend, augmenting certain institutions with increased grants lately. I mean the Archbishop of Canterbury. He has succeeded in giving certain increased grants to certain benefices scattered over England, and as he is so hard on my right hon. friend I looked to see what is the principle on which he was distributing his increased grants, and I find the first principle is that from 1st May all benefices in public patronage are to receive an increase of a certain amount of money, but the Archbishop insists on public control. He says that all benefices which would be entitled to the benefit of this augmentation but for the fact that they are in private patronage will be included if the patronage is made public. What do we see the Archbishop is doing? The good Archbishop who seems, if I may judge, to spend all his leisure in pummelling my right hon. friend—what does he do when he makes regulations? He gets all his ideas from these despised regulations. He insists on public control. This idea of public control is in the mind of the public now, and it would be impossible to make any larger grants of public money without recognising it. There is only one other matter. I have spoken only of the secondary schools. I must say one word about training colleges. For twenty years this threat of a conscience clause has been hanging over the heads of the training colleges. The hon. Member for Cambridge told us in one of the debates in 1906 that he would not object to the introduction of a conscience clause. In their calmer moments gentlemen opposite will not object to anything. All my right hon. friend has done is to introduce a conscience clause and make it effective. The hon. Gentleman says the colleges are destroyed. What harm has been done to them? The denominations have the colleges still. The teachers are there, the atmosphere is there, everything is there. These are the points to which attention has been so strongly drawn. When that matter is considered carefully, too, it will be seen that my right hon. friend has not done the colleges any harm, but rather strengthened their position. The one principle which lies at the root of the thing is whether it is right that these things should be done by administration or not. There was never a grant made to the training colleges nor yet to the secondary schools except in the same way that my right hon. friend has made them. He is willing to admit, if you like, that there are different conditions now. He has stated that in one year there may be different conditions for the payment of public money to these colleges from the conditions of forty or fifty years ago. Why were the conditions of forty years ago such as they were? Simply for one reason. The House of Commons of that day approved of them. The regulations were in accordance with the House of that day. What sanction have the new regulations got? I hope they will have this sanction to-night. They have had it already and they will have it again to-night. The same sanction that these old regulations of the forties and fifties had—the sanction of this House. If my right hon. friend had tried to continue to distribute money to these colleges and secondary schools in accordance with the old conditions the Hosue of Commons would not have tolerated it for a single moment. Now I may plead with Gentlemen opposite. They have fully discussed the matter. I think I may ask them to allow the House of Commons to decide upon it.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 79; Noes, 272. (Division List No. 4.)

AYES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Balcarres, Lord
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.)
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bowles, G. Stewart
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cave, George
Cavendish, Rt. Hon. Victor C.W.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J.A. (Worc
Clark, George Smith (Belfast, N.
Clive, Percy Archer
Courthope, G. Loyd
Dalrymple, Viscount
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Du Cros, Harvey
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fell, Arthur
Fetherstonhaugh, Godfrey
Fletcher, J. S.
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Guinness, Walter Edward
Haddock, George B.
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hardy, Laurence (Kent Ashford)
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heaton, John Henniker
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hills, J. W.
Houston, Robert Paterson
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hon. Col. W.
Keswick, William
King, Sir Henry Seymour (Hull)
Lockwood, Rt. Hn. Lt.-Col. A.R.
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Dublin, S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
M'Arthur, Charles
Magnus, Sir Philip
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Morrison-Bell, Captain
Nicholson, Wm. G. (Petersfield)
Nield, Herbert
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Percy, Earl
Randles, Sir John Scurrah
Ratcliff, Major R. F.
Rawlinson, John Frederick Peel
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, F.E. (Liverpool, Walton)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Starkey, John R.
Staveley-Hill, Henry (Staff'sh.)
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J.G. (Oxf'd Univ.)
Thornton, Percy M.
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Winterton, Earl
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Viscount Valentia and Mr. Forster.

NOES.

Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland D.
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Sir John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, Hon. Hubert
Beck, A. Cecil
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S. Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bethell, Sir J.H. (Essex, Romf'rd
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W.
Bowerman, C. W.

Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brodie, H. C.
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Brunner, Rt Hn Sir J. T (Cheshire
Bryce, J. Annan
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cameron, Robert
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt. Hn. Richard Knight
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras, W.
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, C H (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Cross, Alexander
Davies, Timothy (Furham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dewar, Sir J. A. (Inverness-sh.)
Dickinson, W. H. (St. Pancras, N.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobson, Thomas W.
Duckworth, James
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Dunne, Major E. Martin (Walsall
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Sir Francis (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Erskine, David C.
Essex, R. W.
Esslemont, George Birnie
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Freeman-Thomas, Freeman
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Glen-Coats, Sir T. (Renfrew, W.
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Grayson, Albert Victor
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Rt Hn. Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harmsworth, R. L. (Caithn'ss-sh)
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harvey, W. E. (Derbyshire, N. E
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemmerde, Edward George
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson, J. M. (Aberdeen, W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hodge, John
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Holland, Sir William Henry
Holt, Richard Durning
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Horniman, Emslie John
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster)
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich)
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J. M. (Falkirk B'ghs)
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Rt. Hon. Reginald
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mallet, Charles E.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morrell, Philip
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, Charles N. (Donc'ter)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nuttall, Harry
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
Parker, James (Halifax)
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearson, W. H. M. (Suffolk, Eye)
Perks, Robert William
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Priestley, W. E. B. (Bradf'd, E.)
Radford, G. H.
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mpt'n)
Richardson, A.
Rickett, Sir J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Scott, A. H. (Ashton under Lyne)
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seely, Colonel
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Snowden, P.
Soares, Ernest J.
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Albert (Staffs, N. W.)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomasson, Franklin
Thompson, J. W. H. (Somerset, E
Thorne, William
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Verney, F. W.
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Walsh, Stephen
Walters, John Tudor
Walton, Joseph
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent)
Ward, W. Dudley (Southampt'n)

Waring, Walter
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Rt. Hn. E. (Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, Henry A.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Whitbread, Howard
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Wiles, Thomas
Wilkie, Alexander
Willaims, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, Llewelyn (Carmarth'n
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williamson, A.
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, Hon. G. G. (Hull, W.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES.—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

Main Question again proposed.

SIR WILLIAM HOLLAND (Yorkshire, W.R., Rotherham) moved as an Amendment to add at the end of the Address the following: "But we humbly beg to represent to Your Majesty that in the interests of the trade and commerce of the United Kingdom it is highly important that the *status* of the Board of Trade should be raised, and that it should be placed on a par with the office of a Secretary of State." He said: We have been engaged now for a good many hours in the discussion of a question, which, unfortunately, may be decribed as a distinctly party question. Now the Amendment which I have the honour to move possesses nothing of a party character about it, and for the discussion of a non-party question, I humbly submit that there is no fairer tribunal than the British House of Commons. This question is by no means a new one, for it has occupied the attention of the Chambers of Commerce of the country for twenty-five years, and they have passed innumerable resolutions in favour of raising the *status* of the Board of Trade, and of the creation of a Ministry of Commerce. So strong was the feeling in regard to this matter that a departmental committee was appointed in 1904, which reported in favour of the abolition of what it called the "fictitious" Board of Trade, of the creation of a Minister of Commerce, and of raising the salary from £2,000 to £5,000 a year. The King's Speech of 1905 promised proposals for improving the *status* of the Local Government Board and the Board of Trade, and for establishing a Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and in July of that year the Prime Minister brought in a Bill to abolish the Board of Trade and the Local Government Board and to create Secretaries of State in their place. Unfortunately, there is no mention of the subject in the Speech this year. Probably the Government are too modest to propose better pay for any of their colleagues, but I have no reason to suppose that they are hostile to the proposal. I think they will prefer to be guided by the feeling of the House of Commons before taking any action in regard to this matter. In other countries the Minister of Commerce takes rank with the other Ministers, and it is left to the United Kingdom, with the greatest commerce of the world, to relegate that Minister to an inferior position. That stigma happily in this country has long been removed so far as public opinion is concerned, and we want it also to be removed from the Ministerial rank of the officer who represents trade and commerce in the Cabinet. I am sure the House will agree with me that any board which includes at this time of day the Speaker of the Irish House of Commons as one of its members carries on the face of it evidence of considerable antiquity. That is what happens in connection with the Board of Trade, and that ought to make us heartily ashamed of it. Happily they are never by any chance called together for consultation. If they were, I am afraid that instead of helping matters forward we should get into a serious mess in regard to trade proposals. The Board of Trade controls a very large number of departments indeed. To give the House an idea of the scope of its operations I may mention that there are departments in connection with the Board of Trade for dealing with legislation as to railways, the mercantile marine, harbours, electric lighting, tramways, patents and designs, joint-stock companies, and bankruptcy. A mere enumeration of the departments will give the House some idea of the vast variety and great responsibility of the duties which they have to discharge, and yet although the list is a long one, it is being constantly added to, while the responsibility of some of the old departments is constantly being enlarged. The Merchant Shipping Act of the year before last, and the Designs and Patents Act of last year, will entail very considerable duties being imposed upon the departments to which I have referred. This constant increase in the responsibilities of the Board makes it all the more urgent that the *status* of the President should be improved. The Board of Trade also is responsible for the great bulk of our trade and industrial statistics, and nowadays much more detail is demanded by our traders in regard to the preparation of statistics than was formerly the case, and unless these details are supplied traders find themselves at a great disadvantage as compared with their competitors, who trade where such information is forthcoming. The Board of Trade also is responsible for our standard weights and measures. I do not say that they are anything to be proud of, but such as they are, the Board of Trade is responsible for their maintenance. I think that on the ground of the growth of our commerce alone an irresistible case can be made out for the raising of the *status* of this office, but it is not on the ground of commerce alone that I would base this claim. It is also on the additional ground that the work of the Department is increasing out of all proportion to the increase of the volume of our commerce. The Labour Department created not long ago has added to the responsibilities of the Board of Trade, and it has proved itself to be highly useful. It is responsible for the publication of the *Labour Gazette* every month. The Conciliation Act of 1896 also has enlarged very considerably the sphere of work of the Board of Trade. The responsibility is now imposed on the Board of using its utmost endeavours to avoid or to settle industrial disputes. We all know with what brilliant success that function has been discharged by the Board of Trade in the last few months. I think it is a feather in the cap of the Board of Trade that, although it is far more active in its operations nowadays than it used to be, it meddles far less with the trade of the country than it formerly did. In that way a good deal of the old irritation has been avoided. We frequently hear arguments urged in favour of a Ministry of Labour. I believe there is an Amendment down to give effect to that idea, and without expressing any opinion in regard to it I should like to say that for the purpose of industrial peace, a purpose so dear to everyone of us, a neutral Minister who is allied with neither capital on the one hand nor labour on the other is likely to be a far more efficient instrument for conciliation than if he should be a strong nominee, supported by either side. I think an illustration of that has been found during the last few months. There was added in 1900 what is called an Advisory Committee on Commercial Intelligence. It places at the disposal of the President of the Board of Trade at first hand information in regard to almost all our leading trades. In this way there is always available advice and support whenever the President of the Board of Trade may demand it. There has also been opened in connection with this commercial intelligence branch an office in the city, which is being largely utilised by traders in quest of special information which the Government can get very much more efficiently than any private individual. Commercial missions have been despatched during the past few years to Persia, Siberia, Australia, South Africa, and Canada, so that we now as the results of these visits know at first hand information which is being largely utilised by some traders in the country. The *Board of Trade Journal*, which is published every week, is one of the results of the activity of this branch. While we are anxious to make this department more useful and efficient, we are equally anxious that no efforts it may put forth shall diminish by one jot that enterprise and energy and self-reliance which have gone to build up the great trade of our country. But, speaking on behalf of the responsible commercial opinion of the country, I say that in no field is there quite so great a need for maintaining a sense of proportion as in the field of economy. The only safe test is to rely on efficiency. Efficiency in this instance as in others is the highest economy; and a proof of this efficiency the country has received during the last few months from the President of the Board of Trade in the settlement of the railway dispute. Fancy if you can what was saved to the country by the success with which the President of the Board of Trade intervened on that occasion. Millions of money very likely on the one hand, but who shall measure the privation and hardship on the other which was avoided by that timely intervention? Questions of salary are trivial indeed in comparison with a saving of that enormous magnitude. As a proof of efficiency in the matter of legislation, I might mention the Merchant Shipping Act of 1906. A great many shipowners were inclined to look with more or less suspicion on the new President of the Board of Trade. They were doubtful as to whether he would be able to satisfy their requirements. Now I question whether there are any more enthusiastic admirers of the right hon. Gentleman than the shipowners. I am told that the Shipping Federation at the next annual meeting is likely to pass resolutions expressing appreciation of the value of the services of the President of the Board of Trade. In the Designs and Patents Act, passed last year, there is also a proof of efficiency. It came into operation on 1st January this year, and as a result a large number of foreign firms have sent already their representative over to this country to select sites for the establishment of works. Sites have already been selected which will find employment for 2,000 work-people, and before the end of the year it is expected that works will be established here which will find employment for 10,000 people. That is directly the result of the passing of the Designs and Patents Act. I know that hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House are constantly in the habit of saying that there are two Presidents of the Board of Trade—one on the political platform, and one at the Board of Trade offices administering the duties of the department. While they are careful to express dissent from his action as a politician, I am sure that hon. Members on the other side are as enthusiastic as we are on this side to express admiration of the right hon. Gentleman in his capacity as a statesman.

And, it being Eleven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE IN SCOTLAND.

Mr. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.): May I ask the hon. Member for South Somerset who represents the Board of Agriculture whether he can give the House any information as to the serious outbreak of foot and mouth disease in Edinburgh.

Sir E. STRACHEY (Somersetshire, S.): There has been a serious outbreak of foot and mouth disease in Mid Lothian, and out of 111 beasts 81 have shown clearly marked symptoms of infection. The Board of Agriculture takes so grave a view of the case that they have despatched the chief veterinary officer to Edinburgh at once.

Mr. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.) asked the Vice-President of the Irish Department of Agriculture whether he had taken any steps in regard to the matter.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I have instructed my colleagues in Dublin to take any precautionary measures that are necessary. I have received a telegram from Dublin stating that they have issued an Order prohibiting the importation of ruminants and swine pending further reports.

Adjourned at two minutes after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 6th February, 1908.

HIS MAJESTY THE LATE KING OF PORTUGAL.

The King's answer to the Address of Tuesday last, reported by the Lord Steward (*Earl Beauchamp*) as follows:—

"I thank you for your loyal and dutiful Address."

"I unite with you in the expression of indignation and deep concern at the tidings of the assassination of my illustrious ally and friend, His Majesty the King of Portugal and the Algarves, and of His Royal Highness the Duke of Braganza, and I will not fail to convey to King Manuel your sentiment of abhorrence at the perpetration of such a crime, and your sympathy with His Majesty and the members of the Royal Family of Portugal, and with the people of that country."

ADDRESS.

The King's answer to the Address of Monday last reported by the Lord Steward (*Earl Beauchamp*).

EARL OF CLANWILLIAM.

Ordered, That the Report of the Lord Chancellor of the United Kingdom, made to the House of Lords on Tuesday last that the right of the Earl of Clanwilliam to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland has been established to his satisfaction, be sent to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland, together with a certificate stating that such Report has been made, and that the House has ordered it to be sent to the said Clerk of the Crown in Ireland.

ROLL OF THE LORDS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had prepared and laid it on the Table. The same was ordered to be printed. (No. 5.)

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Bristol Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Crystal Palace Company Bill [H.L.]; Fine Art and General Insurance Company Bill [H.L.]; Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Bill [H.L.]; Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway Bill [H.L.]; Great Western Railway Bill [H.L.]; Great Western Railway (Superannuation Scheme) Bill [H.L.]; Highgate Hill Tramways Bill [H.L.]; London Electric Supply Bill [H.L.]; London Motor Roadways Approach Bill [H.L.]; London (Westminster and Kensington) Electric Supply Companies Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan District Railway Bill [H.L.]; Rhymney Railway Bill [H.L.]; Taff Vale Railway Bill [H.L.], presented; read 1a; and referred to the Examiners.

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill [H.L.]; petition for additional provision; of the London County Council, under their Common Seal, together with the proposed clause and Amendment annexed thereto; read, and referred to the Examiners.

St. Marylebone Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [H.L.]; presented, and read 1a.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NATIONAL PHYSICAL LABORATORY.

Report of the Committee appointed by the Treasury to inquire generally into the work now performed at the National Physical Laboratory. Report, together with a Treasury Minute, dated the 1st February, 1908, recording their Lordships' approval of the recommendations contained in the Report of the majority of the Committee; Minutes of Evidence; with appendices and index.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

GREEK LOAN OF 1832.

Account for 1907.

DUCHY OF CORNWALL.

Account of the receipts and disbursements of the Duchy of Cornwall, for the year ended the 31st December, 1907.

POST OFFICE (TELEGRAPHS) (FOREIGN WRITTEN PRESS TELEGRAMS).

The Telegraph (Foreign Written Press Telegram) Amendment (No. 1), Regulations 1907, dated 15th December, 1907.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

SUPERANNUATION.

Treasury Minute, dated 1st February, 1908, granting a retired allowance to Mr. J. G. Houldsworth, Assistant Superintending Engineer, Post Office, under Section 2 of the Superannuation Act, 1887.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

THE ANGLO-RUSSIAN CONVENTION.

*LORD CURZON OF KEDLESTON rose to call attention to the Convention recently concluded with the Russian Government relating to the respective interests of Great Britain and Russia in Persia, Afghanistan, and Thibet; and to move for Papers. The noble Lord said: My Lords, a week ago the noble Lord the Leader of the Opposition intimated that an opportunity might soon be taken for a more detailed criticism of the Anglo-Russian Convention than was possible on the Address, and the noble Lord opposite who leads the House concurred in the propriety of such a discussion. That is the nature of the debate which I am about to initiate. It will not be conducted, so far as I am concerned, in any spirit of hostility to His Majesty's Government, although many of my remarks, perhaps the majority of them, will be of a somewhat critical nature.

The Convention has been concluded and signed; and for better or for worse, for longer or for shorter, it is part of the accepted diplomacy of this country. In these circumstances I am sure that there is not one of us who would not wish that its future should conform to the most sanguine anticipations of its authors rather than to any misgivings of our own. I shall hope, therefore, to say nothing that may in any way embarrass the future development of this policy, while reserving to myself the right to comment upon the steps by which that policy has been shaped. I am sure that no one will contend that a treaty so far-reaching and so immensely important as this should be free from criticism in this House.

We concede, and I think rightly concede, in this country a wide and almost unlimited discretion in treaty-making to our Governments. They conduct their negotiations in absolute secrecy. Parliament knows little of what is going on, and the public know less. From time to time a Minister with artless candour may lift a corner of the veil and disclose the ravishing beauty of the object behind. In the present case we were denied even that privilege. The Government have it in their power to consult or not to consult experts as they please. I think it hardly possible that they have done so in the present instance. They can sign a treaty at any moment they please, and I have noticed, as a rather remarkable coincidence, that treaties have a habit of being signed a few days after the rising of the House of Commons. In that way immunity from Parliamentary criticism for at least six months is secured.

The Government of the day can also announce the fact of the treaty in a manner to attract popular approval. That was done in the present case. The conclusion of the treaty was announced at the end of August, but it was not until 25th September that its actual terms were disclosed, whereupon many of those journalists and others who had committed themselves, perhaps, to a premature acceptance of its details, found themselves in a rather difficult position. All those advantages, whether designed or accidental, were enjoyed by the Government in the present case. I make no complaint of that. But in proportion as this immense responsibility is vested in the Government of the country, so must they expect to answer for the manner in which it is discharged. I am sure they would be the last to claim to escape criticism on the mere ground that we are dealing with a *fait accompli*. On the contrary, they will probably welcome the opportunity afforded by this discussion of giving an explanation on many points which, because of the delay that has ensued, will have been all the more thought out and matured.

May I begin by saying that I am confident that the majority of your Lordships will approve cordially of the general policy of understandings and alliances which has in recent years been substituted for the attitude of isolation—a splendid but sometimes precarious and possibly even dangerous isolation—in which this nation before stood? A great deal of the credit for that change is due to Lord Lansdowne; and we all know, or at least we dimly apprehend, the part that has been played in it by the influence and the political sagacity of the Sovereign. That the *entente* with France should be followed by an agreement with France's principal ally is only a development of this policy on accepted lines. Further, I think there is no agreement that would generally be more acceptable to this House, or to the country, than one with Russia. Though the political rivalry between the two countries has frequently taken the form of diplomatic conflicts and sometimes of actual collision during the past century, there is, I am convinced, no inherent or ineradicable antipathy or antagonism between the two Governments or the two peoples. In Central Asia, I can testify from my own experiences that the most harmonious relations are capable of existing between Russian and British officers on the frontier. Therefore, that this long feud which has been the source of so much anxiety, which has produced such incessant intrigues, and has involved such great expenditure to Russia, and perhaps still more to India, and to ourselves, should be composed is an end which all of us in this country must *a priori* desire, and which would be still more acceptable to the Indian Government, and the Indian peoples.

I am sure the members of His Majesty's Government will be the last to claim that an arrangement of this sort is any monopoly or invention of their own. When I had the honour of serving Lord Salisbury at the Foreign Office ten years ago, he drew up a scheme for adjusting the relations between Russia and ourselves throughout Asia on a much wider basis even than this. The same idea, I happen to know, entered into the aspirations of Lord Lansdowne, the late Secretary for Foreign Affairs; and the Government of India were consulted in my day and replied in a favourable sense about the conclusion of such an arrangement with Russia concerning Persia and Afghanistan. Therefore there is nothing in this policy to which we on this side of the House would be at all likely *a priori* to object. On the contrary, we should be the first to congratulate His Majesty's Government if we were convinced that the arrangement they have made is of a satisfactory nature, and is likely to be followed by an honourable and permanent peace.

There is one criticism which has been passed upon the Agreement from which I should like to dissociate myself. That is the view that no arrangement ought to have been concluded with Russia because it might have prejudiced the cause of constitutional reform in that country. I see no validity whatever in this plea. Indeed, I see no relevancy between the two propositions. His Majesty's Government could only deal, as they did deal, with the accredited and established Government of the Russian Empire. There is no prospect of that Government being dislodged; and it would appear to me to be not only false policy, but an almost gratuitous impertinence to decline to negotiate with that Government because a constitutional movement is proceeding in Russia with which a large number of people in this country find themselves in sympathy.

I now pass to a more detailed examination of the Treaty itself, and here my remarks will be, perhaps, rather less favourable in character. I noticed that the Chancellor of the Exchequer the other day asked us to look at this Treaty as a whole and not to be too critical about the details. That is all very well so far as it goes. I am quite willing to accept and act upon the philosophy—

> "Give all thou canst. High Heaven rejects
> the lore
> Of nicely calculated less or more."

I am not at all disposed to approach the question in a huckstering spirit. But I venture to point out that this Treaty is not an offensive or defensive alliance between Great Britain and Russia. It is not a general expression of harmonious or friendly relations between these two great Powers. It is a detailed arrangement of their specific interests, claims, and rights in three countries in Asia. If these arrangements are fair to both parties, if they contain the qualities of vitality and permanence, then we may expect this Treaty to produce the feelings and the attitude which His Majesty's Government desire to create. But supposing it is shown that this bargain is doubtful in respect of Afghanistan, bad in respect of Tibet, and worse in respect of Persia, then I think it would be impossible to argue that the whole result could be good.

For my part, I prefer to accept the position suggested by the Foreign Secretary in one of his speeches in the recess, when he asked us to regard this Agreement as a business transaction. But no body of men can be more familar than your Lordships with the fact that a business transaction must be regarded quite as much, if not more, in the light of the terms in which it is concluded as in the spirit and temper in which it is drawn up. The spirit and the temper may change as time goes on, but the written terms remain and survive. This Treaty attempts to compose and adjust the relations of Great Britain and Russia in respect of three Asiatic countries—Persia, Afghanistan, and Tibet—and I will deal with them in the order in which they occur in the Treaty itself. I only wish I had here a large map in which I could punctuate my arguments. This seems to me one of those occasions when one of the late Lord Salisbury's large scale maps is required. In the absence of such, I had seriously thought of having prepared a small map and strewing it hither and thither over your Lordships' benches; but I was rather afraid that I might be held to blame for attempting to convert this august and sequestered Chamber into the semblance of a public meeting, and that it would be regarded as an act almost of impertinence on what is nearly my first appearance in your Lordships' House.

What was the situation in Persia with which His Majesty's Government were called upon to deal? The Persian kingdom is inhabited by a people possessing great quickness of intellect, capacity, and charm, who have preserved their national existence for centuries in spite of a government of which I cannot speak in complimentary terms. The survival of Persian independence has been largely assisted by the geographical situation of the country between the territories of two Great Powers, neither of which can afford to allow Persia to be overrun or absorbed by the other. Russian influence has come in from the north and northwest, impelled by that forward movement which has carried her over the greater part of the Asiatic continent. Great Britain, for her part, has been compelled to take an active concern in Persia, partly because it lay immediately beyond the outer frontiers of India, but even more because long before Russia had displayed an interest in the country, we had, by the enterprise of our merchants, by the activity of our commerce, acquired and developed a great position in the Persian Gulf and in the South of Persia.

How great that position was I was enabled to realise when I was permitted by the late Government to make an official tour to those waters in 1903. I found that in the Persian Gulf over 80 per cent. of the trade and over 90 per cent. of the shipping were in British hands. From the ports on the Gulf this British commerce was carried on mule back and by caravan into the interior. British influence extended, therefore, not only over the waters of the Gulf, but over a great stretch of territory along the South of Persia all the way from Baluchistan on the east to the Tigris on the west; and not only was this position unchallenged and supreme, but, I would point out as a matter of credit, that during the hundred years in which it had grown up it had never been utilised to acquire any position of territorial aggrandisement by this country.

The British ascendency in the South of Persia was balanced by a corresponding and, perhaps, an even greater Russian ascendency in the north, largely reinforced by the fact that the Russians have what we have not, great military forces lying behind a contiguous land frontier many hundred miles in length. Russian influence came down from her frontier towards the centre of the country; and there we can point to the limits where the two spheres of influence joined. There was no gap whatever between them except such as was created by the great sand deserts which stretch across the heart of Persia, and form a natural division between the two spheres upon which I regret that more attention was not bestowed by His Majesty's Government in this arrangement.

Now, what happened when this Agreement was concluded? His Majesty's Government, after repeating with Russia the exchange of formal assurances as to the integrity and independence of Persia, proceeded to the creation of certain zones in that country, and they rather rashly stated in the preamble the principles upon which they intended to act. I hope your Lordships will permit me to read the words—

> "Considering that each of them has, for geographical and economical reasons, a special interest in the maintenance of peace and order in certain provinces of Persia adjoining, or in the neighbourhood of, the Russian frontier on the other hand, and the frontiers of Afghanistan and Baluchistan on the other."

In ostensible pursuit of these principles His Majesty's Government then proceeded to trace three spheres in Persia. The first was the Russian sphere in the north in which we engaged not to seek for ourselves, and not to support in favour of British subjects or in favour of subjects of third Powers, any concessions of a political or commercial nature. The second consisted of the British sphere, in respect of which Russia entered into similar engagements; and the third sphere, or neutral zone, practically covered the whole of the rest of the country.

May I ask your attention to each of these spheres in the order in which I have enumerated them? First, as regards the Russian sphere, let it be remembered that on the principles laid down this should have consisted of the provinces adjoining or in the neighbourhood of the Russian frontier. Those provinces are—and here I regret the absence of the map—Azerbijan, Ghilan, and Khorasan in the extreme north. Nevertheless, His Majesty's Government have thrown into the Russian sphere the province of Mazanderan, south of the Caspian Sea, which can only be described as adjoining the Russian frontier on the hypothesis that the Caspian Sea is a Russian possession and a Russian frontier. Then, if we turn to the western side of this sphere of influence, we find that the line of the Russian sphere has been drawn down to the border between Turkey and Persia to a spot in the neighbourhood of Baghdad on the main line of commerce between Baghdad and Teheran, Kasr-i-Shirin, a spot not less than 400 miles distant from the nearest point on the Russian frontier. That is throwing into the Russian sphere the entire province of Persian Kurdistan, Ardelan, and the Kermanshah district, and, what is perhaps more serious still, the important British trade route that runs from Baghdad *via* Khanikin and Kermanshah to Teheran.

Not content with this, His Majesty's Government have then taken the line of the Russian sphere and deflected it still further to the south so as to enable it to include Ispahan, the old capital of Persia, which is situated about midway between the Caspian Sea and the Gulf. In Ispahan, when I was in Persia a few years ago, Russian interests and trade could scarcely have been said to have acquired any prominent part at all, while, on the contrary, during the last 100 years we have there built up a position of assured and conspicuous predominance. Nevertheless, Ispahan is gone. Not satisfied with this, His Majesty's Government have then taken the line and deflected it still further to the south-east so as to include the Persian city of Yezd. Now there is not, and never has been, any conceivable Russian interest in Yezd; that is a place where we have for years had a British Indian colony established in connection with the Persian community of Parsees, who are the parents of that famous and intelligent community that has risen to a position of so much affluence and distinction in Bombay. Yezd, in spite of those conditions, has been included in the Russian sphere.

From that point the line of the Russian sphere slopes away to the Afghan frontier. I would ask your Lordships to observe, as the point of this argument, that the Russian sphere as I have described it does not accord with the preamble of the Treaty, because the greater part of it is not adjoining or neighbouring to the Russian frontier; and Russian predominance in it cannot be justified on economic, any more than on geographical, grounds, because in the greater part of it that predominance does not exist. Out of the twelve cities of Persia containing a population of more than 30,000 inhabitants, no fewer than eleven are included in the Russian sphere, and these eleven contain the capital Teheran, with all the possibilities of diplomatic and commercial pressure in the future which that position affords. With that position of affairs I confess I look with some apprehension to the future that is likely to await the few British commercial or economic institutions or concessions that we still enjoy in the capital of the Persian kingdom.

Then out of the eleven trade routes by which foreign commerce enters Persia, as many as seven are placed in the Russian sphere; and these include the trade route to which I referred just now, which enters Persia on the western side from the direction of Baghdad, and by which the whole of the heavy articles of commerce whether from England or India incapable of entering the country on mule-back from the south—because of the precipitous ridges they have to cross—has hitherto been brought up the waters of the Persian Gulf and up the Tigris to Baghdad, and then across the mountains into Persia. When I was in Persia the value of the British trade on this route amounted to £1,000,000 a year, and at present it is not much less than £750,000. Yet the whole of that trade route has been handed over to the Russian sphere. This short description is, I think, sufficient to show that the Russian sphere contains all that is best in Persia, all the principal centres of trade, all the main sources of political or commercial influence, and in the whole of this sphere, so long as this Treaty continues, we are debarred from seeking to procure political or commercial concessions.

I remember that the Foreign Secretary made a speech at Berwick in the recess in which he said—

> "We have safeguarded the Indian frontier without foregoing commercial prospects in any part of Persia where we had any."

If that is the degree of knowledge possessed by the advisers of the Secretary of State, I am not surprised at the sacrifices which appear to me to have been made. But, even so, I think we should have been content if a similar elasticity of interpretation had been applied to the construction of the British sphere, at least where the Russian sphere ended, brought down, as it has been, to the heart of the country. There we might have expected the British sphere to begin, the more so in consequence of the conditions of predominance I have described in the southern part of the country. Every argument that could be used for bringing the Russian sphere down to Kasr-i-Shirin, or Ispahan, or Yezd could equally and even more strongly be adduced for bringing the British sphere up to those points.

In the south-west of Persia your Lordships may have heard of the Karun River. Many years ago Sir H. Drummond Wolff procured amid a great flourish of trumpets the concession of the navigation of that river for British enterprise as a set-off to a Russian political concession in the north. A little further to the east is the Persian port of Bushire, where for 150 years we have had a factory, and where for 100 years we have had a British Consul-General and Resident who is almost the uncrowned King of the Persian Gulf. From Bushire starts the main line of commercial entry into Persia from the south—a line which goes up country from Shiraz to Ispahan, and at Shiraz we have his summer quarters. Yet, though in the whole of this sphere the evidences of British commercial supremacy are unquestionable, the entire region has been excluded from British influence. In future we are to have no greater rights there than are enjoyed by Germany, or even by Russia herself. What ought to have been, according to all the arguments used in this treaty, a British sphere, has been converted into a sort of Tom Tiddler's ground upon which the nations of Europe will fight out their commercial battles in future. Russia is left secure in her position of ascendency in the north, but in the south, where, as a result of all this labour, this expenditure, these disinterested sacrifices, we have acquired the position which I have described, we are no better off than the latest new-comer in the country. It may be that the noble Lord who speaks for the Government in this House will be able to give some explanation of this part of the Agreement; but I can only say that it appears to me to involve an almost inexplicable sacrifice of British interests in that part of Persia.

I now pass to the British sphere. This is drawn under the Agreement from an arbitrary point on the Afghan frontier through the Persian town of Kerman, to the port on the Persian Gulf of Bandar Abbas. If the justification for these arrangements is that they are intended to protect the frontiers of the two Powers, how is it that a section of the Afghan frontier on the extreme north-west, from Zulfikar, where the Russian frontier joins the Afghan, down to the point at which the British sphere starts, has been left out of the Agreement? The omission of that piece of frontier from the Agreement is likely to be attended with rather inconvenient consequences in the future. The British sphere contains only one city of any size—Kerman—against eleven within the Russian sphere; and only one trade route as against seven. It is a sphere of no commercial or economic importance whatsoever. It is inhabited, where it is inhabited at all, by a sparse and, in the main, a nomadic population; it is only one-half the size of the Russian sphere, and the greater part of it consists of what the late Lord Salisbury used wittily to describe as "very light soil."

All the reasons that have been alleged for extending and stretching the Russian sphere down into the heart of the country have here been ignored, and the only considerations advanced by His Majesty's Government are those of a strategical nature. They tell us that by the creation of the British sphere they have protected an exposed corner of our Indian Empire in the neighbourhood of Seistan. I do not object to that claim at all. I should be the last to minimise its importance, because I believe I was one of the first to draw attention in my writings on Persia many years ago to the strategical importance of Seistan. I am sure we are glad that that aspect of the case has been so satisfactorily considered by His Majesty's Government; but, while keeping a very open eye to that peril, it seems to me that they have applied the telescope to their blind eye with respect to the remaining British interests in the whole of the rest of Persia. As regards strategy, the Government would be mistaken if they thought our strategical interests in Persia were confined to a particular corner of Beluchistan. Any railway advance either to the Beluch frontier or beyond it into India is almost a physical impossibility and your Lordships have only to read the weighty and conclusive argument that was drawn up by that eminent authority Captain Mahan to know that the real strategical danger to India on the Persian side lies from the direction of the Persian Gulf. But putting that by, I submit to your Lordships that our interests in Persia are not strategical either alone or mainly. The whole of my argument would be worth nothing, and the whole history of the past 100 years might not have been, if it were not clearly established that we have great commercial, political, economic, and telegraphic interests in all parts of Persia, but particularly in the south. In the case of Russia, the whole of these considerations in drawing up the Russian sphere have been borne in mind, and have been used to justify an extension of influence which the most ardent sympathiser with Russia can scarcely have dreamed of in his wildest hopes. In the case of the British sphere, they have all been ignored, and for the security of a portion of the British border—not unimportant in itself—it seems to me that we have sacrificed our commercial and political position, or at least have jeopardised that position over the greater part of Persia.

I am now brought to a consideration of the Persian Gulf. Your Lordships are no doubt familiar with the fact that there is scarcely any page of British history which can be read with greater pride and satisfaction by Englishmen than that which records our relations with the Persian Gulf. By the most disinterested efforts, by immense expenditure spread over more than 100 years, we have pacified the waters of that sea; we have sounded and buoyed the channels, and laid down the telegraph cables by which the news of this debate will be conveyed this evening to India or the Colonies beyond. We have enabled Persian authority to establish itself on the northern littoral of the Gulf. We have built up a large trade for ourselves, and we have made a secure pathway for the commerce of other nations. If there is a part of Persia where our interests, accordingly, might have been expected to be recognised in this document, it should have been in the Persian Gulf. But there is no mention of the Persian Gulf whatever in the body of this Agreement. It is true that prefixed to the Agreement is a letter, issued by the Foreign Office, in which His Majesty's Government draw attention to previous declarations of British policy and reaffirm the importance of maintaining British influence in the Persian Gulf, the most significant of those declarations having been, as your Lordships know very well, the famous statement by Lord Lansdowne in this House in May, 1903. It is said in this letter that the Russian Government in the course of the negotiations explicitly stated that they do not deny the special interests of Great Britain in the Persian Gulf, a statement of which His Majesty's Government have taken formal note.

I cannot help asking the question—If that assurance was given by the Russian Government, why was it not stated in a letter of the Russian Minister, above his own signature and in his own name? Is it not a remarkable thing that it should only appear second-hand as a quotation in a letter from our Foreign Secretary in this country? One of the main reasons for which we are invited to welcome this Treaty is this, that Russian declarations, which have hitherto only been recorded in the privacy of diplomatic intercourse, are here, for the first time, written down in black and white. We are told that immense importance attaches to the doctrine, *litera scripta manet.* I do not think that argument is very complimentary to the Russian Government, because it implies that a spoken assurance is of less validity than a written assurance. It is, therefore, not an argument which I would myself employ; but as it is employed by others, I am compelled to ask, Where is the *litera scripta* about the Persian Gulf? Why does it not appear in the Agreement? Why, instead of the *litera scripta*, are we only given a quotation from what the Russian Minister is said to have said to our Secretary of State?

I think I might go a little further and ask, Why is the assurance given by Russia about the Persian Gulf not included in the body of the Treaty? It is only fair to note the two-fold explanation given by the Government. They say, in the first place, that the Gulf does not touch the Russian or the British frontier, and that, therefore, there is no occasion to allude to it. But the Gulf touches the British frontier just as much as the greater part of the Russian sphere, of which I have spoken, touches the Russian frontier, and rather more closely if it is a question of mileage. Moreover, it is impossible to use this plea seriously, because if you advance a little further into the study of these documents you find that His Majesty's Government have not been averse from concluding agreements with Russia about Tibet, which, at no point, touches the Russian frontier. Therefore, I think that that plea has only to be stated to be dismissed.

The second defence of His Majesty's Government is that the Gulf is only partly in Persian territory. I am not an international lawyer, but I suppose that the reference is to those parts of the Persian Gulf which are in the territorial waters of Persia and to the Islands strewn about the Gulf which belong to her. I think if British influence had been admitted in those regions we should have been quite content. On the southern shores of the Gulf we have treaties with the Arab states which are quite sufficient for our purpose, and in the rest of the Gulf we are content to trust to His Majesty's ships; but even this limited agreement about the Persian waters of the Gulf is not included in the arrangement, and I can only conclude that the omission of any reference to the Persian Gulf in the body of the Treaty is one of its most unfortunate features.

If, however, all these concessions, great and notable as they are, of which I have spoken, were certain or were likely to be attended by the consequences named in the preamble—that they would prevent all causes of misunderstanding in the future—I think we should accept them with less misgivings. But what is almost certain to happen in the future? The Russian Government, after recovering its political equilibrium and momentum, will naturally devote itself by the use of all its energies and its great means to the exploitation of those regions of Persia which have been assigned to it as its sphere under this Agreement. Presently, probably at no great distance of time, the Russian railways will be brought down to Ispahan and Yezd, and if then Russian subjects go to the Persian Government with an appeal for their extension even to the Gulf, under the terms of this Agreement we are debarred from opposing. Therefore, it is perfectly certain that we must expect the Russian system of railways connected with the Russian base, to be extended right through the heart of the country, not merely to Ispahan and

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Yezd, but to the Gulf. When that consummation happens, where will British ascendency in Southern Persia or the Persian Gulf be? I feel almost tempted to ask where will Persian independence be then. When that day arrives and the historian of the future is concerned to determine the moment at which that future was fixed, he will have no alternative but to attribute it to the conclusion of this Agreement.

There is one other point to which, before I leave the subject of Persia, I must allude. I wonder whether the spokesman of His Majesty's Government will be in a position to give us information as to the effect this Agreement has produced upon the Persians themselves. I am almost astounded at the coolness, I might even say the effrontery, with which the British Government is in the habit of parcelling out the territory of Powers whose independence and integrity it assures them at the same time it has no other intention than to preserve, and only informs the Power concerned of the arrangement that has been made after the agreement has been concluded. I have no means first hand of ascertaining what the impressions of the Persians are about this Agreement; but, from the information of friends who have, I should think their feelings must be of a somewhat disquieting nature. Asiatics find some difficulty in distinguishing between geographical and economic spheres and political spheres. They have seen one develop into the other with suspicious and almost unbroken regularity; and I doubt very much if the average Persian would, in consequence of this Treaty, look with any greater confidence upon the future of his country than he did before.

There is another aspect to which, quite briefly and with great seriousness, I would like to ask your Lordships' attention. I think His Majesty's Government, or any Government of this country, ought to proceed very warily in dealing with the territory or the future of Mahomedan countries. The British Sovereign is the ruler of the second largest Mahomedan population in the world. It is one of the most valuable and loyal elements, and one of the most solid assets, in the fabric of the British Empire. I am not certain that we have been altogether happy in recent years in our dealings with Mussulman countries. I do not feel sure that Morocco has any great cause to be grateful to us for our action on her behalf. However that may be, I do venture to say that it ought to be one of the cardinal features of our policy, wholly irrespective of party, to avoid any attitude or any policy which would be capable of arousing the suspicion that we were in the least degree indifferent to the interests or careless about the future of Mahomedan countries or institutions.

There is one defence of this Agreement with regard to Persia to which I am bound in fairness to refer. We are told that its great justification has been that the Russian Government has refrained from intervening in the troubled state of affairs in that unfortunate country. I am not at all clear that it is due to this treaty that that abstention has taken place; nor am I confident that, should the trouble develop further, that abstention will be capable of being maintained. But I think the real answer to this plea is contained in the pledges of the Russian Government in regard to the integrity and independence of Persia—pledges not contained for the first time in this treaty, but repeated no fewer than five times in the last seventy years. They are pledges to which I myself attach so much importance that I do not think they can have acquired any superior validity by being included in this written arrangement. I am sorry not to have been able to speak about the Persian aspect of this case in more favourable terms. But I have been reluctantly driven to the conclusion that, whatever may be the ultimate effects produced, we have thrown away to a large extent the efforts of our diplomacy and of our trade for more than a century; and I do not feel at all sure that this treaty, in its Persian aspect, will conduce either to the security of India, to the independence of Persia, or to the peace of Asia.

Afghanistan.

As regards Afghanistan, the preamble inserted by His Majesty's advisers is quite admirable. Their object is

> "to ensure perfect security on the respective frontiers of Russia and Great Britain in Central Asia, and to maintain in those regions solid and lasting peace."

Your Lordships will be aware that Afghanistan does not enjoy the same degree of political independence as the kingdom of Persia. For the best part of a half a century the Afghan ruler has engaged to conduct his foreign relations only through Great Britain—to have no foreign relations except with Great Britain—and in consequence he has received an ample subsidy from the Government of India. Therefore it is not possible to argue that Russia has ever enjoyed or does now enjoy a position of equality with ourselves in Afghanistan. On the contrary, we have acquired and have enjoyed a position of political predominance there quite as great as, indeed greater than, any that can be claimed by Russia in those provinces of Persia to which I have already referred.

In the case of Afghanistan, therefore, we might expect that concessions, if made, would not, at any rate, emanate from us. What are the contributions made by the two Powers to this new Agreement with regard to Afghanistan? The British Government engages not to change the political *status* of Afghanistan; not to annex or occupy any portion of the country; and not to interfere in its internal administration. These three engagements correctly represent the spirit of British policy in Afghanistan for many years; and if His Majesty's Government thought it desirable to embody them in a definite diplomatic Agreement, no one has any right to cavil. Then there is this fourth engagement—that the British Government will exercise their influence in Afghanistan only in a pacific sense, and will not themselves take, nor encourage Afghanistan to take, any measures threatening Russia. That too, represents the spirit of our policy. I do not believe that any Government has existed in this country for the last twenty-five years, or that any Government will ever exist again, which would contemplate marching through Afghanistan and using Afghan territory as a jumping-off place for an attack upon Russian possessions in Central Asia. I should regard any such proceeding as a wild and demented act. So far so good, although the inclusion of this provision here seems to give to Russia for the first time the right to have a voice in our arrangements with the Ameer of Afghanistan which may be fraught with some inconvenience in the future.

Apart from that, there is an ambiguity in this clause to which I should like to draw attention. Your Lordships will remember that the frontier of Afghanistan between Persia and the Oxus was drawn up and delimited by the British and Russian Governments in the years 1885 and 1886, and it is recorded in a treaty between the two Powers. In other words, both Powers have pledged themselves to the observance of that frontier. We are bound by the most solemn obligations to the Ameer of Afghanistan to defend it, if attacked; and it may be regarded, therefore, as the outer frontier of the British Empire. When then we pledge ourselves never to take ourselves, nor to allow Afghanistan to take, any action of a threatening or hostile character across that frontier, may I ask why it is that the Russian Government has not given a similar pledge in connection with this matter?

Along the whole northern frontier of Afghanistan there are Russian positions, Russan forts, and Russian troops, and even their railways are stored there for extension to Herat. If this treaty is going to be a solid guarantee for the peace of Asia, might we not expect that while we gave these pledges Russia would have assured us that these preparations would be desisted from or abandoned? But there is not a word as to that. Supposing the worst should happen. Supposing at any time a violent infringement of this frontier which we have demarcated and guaranteed should take place. Supposing another Penjdeh incident should occur. How are we to reconcile our obligation to the Ameer of Afghanistan to defend his frontier with the obligation that we have assumed in this Treaty not to take or to encourage Afghanistan to take any measures threatening Russia? That is a position that I earnestly hope may never arise, but in discussing this Treaty we have to look at possibilities, and the possibility in this case is one, I think, of a very serious character. So much for our engagements with regard to Afghanistan.

In reply, the Russian Government have given two declarations, the second of which flows from the first. In the first place, they declare that they recognise Afghanistan as outside the sphere of Russian influence, and they engage that all their political relations with Afghanistan shall be conducted through the intermediary of His Britannic Majesty's Government; and, secondly, they engage not to send any agents into Afghanistan. I have often had occasion in writing and talking about Central Asian affairs, to deplore the general lack of knowledge that prevails on this subject in this country. But if anywhere such an ignorance did not exist, I should have thought it would be in reference to Afghanistan and our engagements with Afghanistan. Yet I have seen in many quarters, and even in that sane and well-informed organ the *Westminster Gazette*, this defence of these provisions—

> "At the same time, we get also what we have never been able to obtain before, a solemn recognition on Russia's part that Afghanistan lies outside her sphere of influence, and a promise to conduct all political relations with Afghanistan exclusively through the British Government."

Now, if this were a concession given for the first time it would be very valuable, it might even be a *quid pro quo* for the concessions which we ourselves have made. But your Lordships are probably aware that this engagement, given by Russia for the first time in the year 1869, has been repeated by her *totidem verbis* in 1874, 1876, 1877, 1878, 1882, 1884, 1885, 1887, 1888, and 1900. I am not aware that it gains in validity by being repeated for the twelfth time. But, however that may be, to claim it as a concession—to regard it as a *quid pro quo*—is clearly out of the question.

On the other hand, three definite concessions have been made by us in this arrangement. In the first place, Russian and Afghan frontier officials are to be permitted to hold direct relations in the future on local and non-political questions. Well, the result of that experiment depends largely upon the manner in which those terms are interpreted. My experience is that all frontier questions either begin by being or end by being political questions. And how are we to know, several hundred miles away, what is the particular character of the discussion that is going on between the Russian and the Afghan frontier officials? When I was in India the late Ameer of Afghanistan sent to me a letter from a Russian frontier official to one of his officers, affecting to relate to local and non-political matters. The space occupied by them in the document was very small, but there were some pointed allusions to the Boer war, which was at that time proceeding, in a manner not altogether favourable to British interests. I hope that such will not be the character of the conversations or correspondence that may take place in the future.

But the most remarkable feature about this provision is this, that, while we concede to Russia these relations between their frontier officials and the Afghan frontier officials, we do not enjoy them on our own borders. Here we are committing the Ameer, apparently without consultation with him, and so far without his consent, to setting up a system on his Russian frontier which does not exist on our own. No one knows better than the noble Lord (Lord Elgin) that one of the main difficulties of the Indian Government is in endeavouring to settle matters on the frontier between India and Afghanistan The difficulty arises in the main from the fact that the Ameer will not allow his local officials to communicate with ours. It seems to me, therefore, that instead of committing him to an arrangement of this sort with Russia it would have been rather more appropriate to induce him, in the first place, to make a similar arrangement with ourselves.

The second concession we have made is the admission of commercial agents in the future. I hope His Majesty's Government will give some explanation as to this. It is a little difficult to reconcile the article in the Treaty in which Russia engages not to send any agents into Afghanistan with the clause to which I am now referring. And I am a little afraid as to the manner in which the commercial agents may act. Perhaps His Majesty's Government will be willing to tell us where it is contemplated that they will be—whether they will be on the frontier or whether they will be sent to other parts of the country. No one knows better than the Government themselves that commerce and politics are very much apt to overlap in Central Asia, and that a commercial agent is inclined to forget his commerce and to remember that he is only an agent.

The third concession that we have made to Russia is equality of commerical opportunity. Surely this is a part of the internal administration of the Ameer of Afghanistan with which we have pledged ourselves not to interfere. I should have thought that it was hardly for us to make promises as to his commercial or tariff system—at any rate, without previous consultation with him. But supposing the Ameer to agree, as I hope that he may, may I ask why reciprocal concessions have not been made to us in the Russian territories in Central Asia? If we are to open to the Russians the markets of Afghanistan, why are they not opening to us the markets of the Russian Khanates of Khiva and Bokhara? For years we have been trying to obtain commercial agents in those cities. Surely if we make this very substantial concession to Russia in Afghanistan the least we should expect is a similar concession to ourselves in the Russian Protectorates in Asia.

Then there comes the question of the assent of the Ameer. That, of course, is a very serious matter. This treaty was concluded in August last. Six months have since elapsed, and the Leader of the House told us the other day that the assent of his Highness has not yet been received. He attributed this to the customary slowness of Orientals. I hope that that may be the case. But, surely, instead of making this Agreement, assuming the consent of the Ameer, and waiting to acquire it, the more prudent course would have been to consult the Ameer and to have obtained his assent in advance. All last winter, we read in the papers with great gratification, his Highness was in India, and met with a great reception there, and his sentiments were of a most friendly description. Surely, there could not have been a better opportunity of discussing with him these matters than was afforded then; and the whole of this delay might have been avioded if that had been done. I hope for the sake of the Agreement that there may be no trouble about the assent of the Ameer. But I need hardly say that, if he withheld his assent, a situation of the greatest inconvenience and anxiety would be created. I shall now pass from the question of Afghanistan. Summing up the situation there we appear to me, so far as I can see, to have obtained nothing in return for very substantial concessions. Afghanistan still remains protected by exactly the same pledges as before, with the difference that they are now embodied in a treaty. Meanwhile we have tied our hands and the hands of the Ameer by a number of engagements which may possibly be a source of some anxiety in the future.

Tibet

I pass, in conclusion, to the subject of Tibet, and here I venture to say, the treaty stands in extreme need of explanation and defence. I certainly will not presume to inflict upon your Lordships on the present occasion a discussion of the Tibetan policy either of the late or of the present Government. Possibly another occasion may occur to do that. I am quite content to take the operation of this treaty upon Tibet as it stood when His Majesty's Government assumed power. You are doubtless familiar with the general facts as regards Tibet. Tibet is a country which stretches for many hundreds of miles alongside and outside of the northern frontier of India. Its capital, Lhasa, is less than 200 miles from the nearest point of the British border. The Indian Government have had close contact—sometimes friendly, sometimes the reverse—with the Government of Tibet for the best part of 150 years. We have made treaties with them. A substantial trade has grown up between the two countries, and every geographical and economic reason that could be or has been alleged in earlier parts of this treaty for the predominance of Russian influence in other parts of Asia could be advanced, with much stronger force, for British predominance in Tibet.

Quite lately we were called upon to vindicate our rights and our interests there at considerable expense, but with entire success; and we secured a treaty which gave us the legitimate fruits of that undertaking. Under this treaty friendly relations were gradually growing up between the people and the authorities of Southern Tibet and ourselves; and we had thoroughly convinced them of our intention not to interfere at all with the administration of their country, and gradually we were breaking down the wall of suspicion and distrust that has hitherto severed those two countries and peoples. That was our position in relation to Tibet when His Majesty's Government assumed office.

Now what is the Russian position? The nearest point of the Russian frontier to the capital of Tibet, Lhasa, is 1,700 miles distant. The Russian frontier is at no point contiguous with the Tibetan frontier. On the north the strip of Mongolia, 400 miles in width, extends between. Russia, so far as I know, has invested no money, acquired no stake in Tibet; and according to all the arguments which we have been considering in the earlier part of this discussion, she has nothing to do with Tibet at all. I hope you will not believe that this is merely my own contention or my own narrow view of the case. It has been expressly admitted by the Russian Government themselves. Only as recently as 11th April, 1903, the Russian Ambassador told Lord Lansdowne that Tibet was in any contingency outside the sphere of Russian policy. And yet in the face of this agreement, surely of a most explicit and categorical nature, His Majesty's Government in this treaty have conceded equal rights and interests to Russia in Tibet with ourselves, and have exchanged assurances with them based upon the assumption of equality.

His Majesty's Government have even consented in an annex to this treaty to consult the Russian Government about the manner in which we are to carry out one of our own treaty obligations with the Tibetan Government with respect to the evacuation of the Chumbi Valley. The Chumbi Valley is a small tongue of territory stretching down into the British border 2,000 miles distant from the nearest point of the Russian frontier, which we have temporarily occupied as a guarantee for the fulfilment of their obligations by the Tibetan Government. I confess I do not know what Russia has to do with the Chumbi Valley or with our engagements relating thereto with the Tibetan Government. I have referred to the Persian part of this treaty as involving great sacrifices. The Tibetan part appears to me to involve an absolute surrender; and really this particular annex as regards the Chumbi Valley, unless it is capable of explanation, seems to me to be almost a humiliation.

There is only one other point which I wish to touch. His Majesty's Government claim this treaty to be one leading up to a solid and lasting peace. If that be so, surely the first object should be to exclude any possible sources of future dissension. You all probably know that one of the main sources of the mischief a few years ago was the presence in Lhasa of a Russian Buddhist subject named Dorjieff, who was the evil genius of the Dalai Lama, who led him to believe that he would be assisted by Russia, and who was largely responsible for the war that ensued. Surely in any agreement for the future the presence of such persons ought not to be expressly encouraged. And yet we find an article introduced into this treaty by which Buddhist subjects of Great Britain or Russia may enter into direct relations on strictly religious matters with the Dalai Lama and other representatives of Buddhism in Tibet. This, of course, means a passport for the return of this man Dorjieff to the country. And, really, in the future, when the Russian and Afghan officials are discussing local and non-political matters on the Afghan frontier, and when Dorjieff is discussing strictly religious questions with the Dalai Lama of Tibet at Lhasa, I should almost wish to possess the magic carpet in order to transport myself to that country, and be present for a short time at those deliberations.

As regards Tibet then, every evidence pointed to the growth of friendly and intimate relations between the Tibetans and ourselves, and to the establishment of British predominance in Tibet as assured and as well justified as Russian predominance in those regions adjoining the Persian frontier to which I have before alluded. And yet we have, it seems to me, thrown all these advantages lightly away and have admitted the right of Russia to have a voice in anything we may do in the future as regards Tibet.

I am glad to bring these observations to an end, and I am sorry to have detained your Lordships so long; but I am sure your Lordships will allow that some lengthened exposition has been necessary in the treatment of a subject as important as this. For my own part, I regard this treaty as the most far-reaching, the most important treaty that has been concluded by the British Government during the past fifty years. It must profoundly affect the future of three Asiatic countries. It must leave an indelible mark, let us hope for good, on the relations between Great Britain and Russia, and it must exercise an almost inexpressible influence upon the future of the British dominion in Asia, a problem which, I think, with the most intense conviction of which I am capable, is the most momentous which can come before the minds of British statesmen.

Your Lordships will, therefore, I hope, not complain if you have been asked to turn aside for one afternoon to the contemplation of this subject and if, even for the space of an hour and a quarter, I have troubled your Lordships with what is, in reality, the condensed result of the studies and the travels of more than twenty years. I wish that my own impressions of the treaty, point by point, could have been more favourable than they have been; but I cannot honestly say to your Lordships that that is a fair bargain which I hold to be unequal and unfair. No one would be better pleased than myself if the noble Lord opposite is enabled to give explanations that may remove many of the apprehensions I have suggested; still more, if the concessions which I have described, and which appear to me so excessive, turn out to have been well and profitably made and if we find that in giving much, we have gained more. And I am sure that there is no body of men in the United Kingdom who would be more anxious than your Lordships' House to congratulate the Foreign Secretary of this country, who carries with him so large a measure of public confidence, if we could feel convinced that the arrangement which he has here concluded will not merely involve a temporary reconciliation of divergent interests, but will be a lasting guarantee for peace and harmony between those two great nations in Central Asia.

Moved, That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty for Papers respecting the Convention recently concluded with the Russian Government relating to the respective interests of Great Britain and Russia in Persia, Afghanistan, and Thibet.—(*Lord Curzon of Kedleston.*)

THE EARL OF CROMER: My Lords, I have to claim a full measure of the indulgence which I am aware is always accorded to those who address your Lordships' House for the first time. The noble Lord, in the eloquent address to which we have just listened, has dwelt on certain defects in the Anglo-Russian Agreement. He brings to bear on this question an intimate knowledge of the details possessed by few individuals, and with which I certainly cannot in any degree compete. I am not going to attempt to deal with the details, upon which I have no doubt we shall hear some explanation shortly from the noble Lord the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

I approach this question from a wholly different and more general point of view than that of the noble Lord. I do not think it is possible to appreciate fully the merits or demerits of this Agreement without taking into consideration the general condition of affairs in the East, especially in those countries with which Great Britain is principally concerned. That condition was described about a year ago by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs as one of unrest. I do not quarrel with the phrase. It is probably as correct as any very condensed and epigrammatic expression of this kind could be; but it admits of being amplified. It would perhaps be correct to say that the transition stage through which the East has been passing for many years has now reached a somewhat acute phase. Everywhere you see that the West is endeavouring to thrust its ideas on the East, or that the East is endeavouring, on its own initiative, to assimilate Western government, with which it is wholly unfamiliar. The most conflicting elements have been thrown into the political, social, and administrative melting pot, and I do not think it is possible for any one to foretell what will be the result of the attempt to fuse all these elements together.

I should like to state briefly what I consider to be those conflicting elements, and I hope I may be able to convince your Lordships that my observations have a real bearing on the question of the Anglo-Russian Agreement. In the first place, we see almost everywhere deep-seated religious feeling grappling with agnosticism, or something approaching agnosticism. There can be no doubt that the contact of the West tends in a great degree to unsettle the whole moral basis on which the fabric of Eastern society rests. Then, again, we have, almost everywhere, antique customs, old-world-ideas, and solid conservatism grappling with methods of government wholly novel to Eastern minds. I should like to give your Lordships an illustration of what I mean by this last observation. I have been told by a doctor very learned in the Moslem Law that an apostate from the Moslem religion, or, as we should call him, a convert to Christianity, should most certainly be stoned; and I have been officially informed by an exponent of the Moslem Law that the only punishment admissible, without violating the sacred law of Islam, for certain offences was that the criminal should be mutilated and crucified.

Then we have almost everywhere, and notably in India and Egypt, a great gulf fixed between the masses and the educated classes. Very little has been done in recent years to temper the ignorance of the masses. On the other side, you have an educated class possessing a high and somewhat empirical form of knowledge, unleavened by practical experience, and they bring this knowledge to bear on some of the most perplexing problems which could occupy the minds of the Statesman and the administrator. Then it has to be borne in mind that in this country we have considerable difficulties to contend with. The growth of democracy has very much increased the difficulties of the problem which was described some years ago by Mr. Bright as that of governing a people by a people—the people of India by the people of England. I cannot help expressing the wish that some of the irresponsible politicians in this country who speak with so much confidence and with so little reserve on this Eastern question would occasionally bear in mind the warning of the Duke of Wellington that—

> "If ever you lose India, Parliament will lose it for you."

And, if my recollection serves me rightly, the Duke only spoke of one branch of the Legislature, and that branch not your Lordships' House.

It is to be remembered, too, that the recent Japanese war has exercised a very great influence on the minds of Eastern, and more especially I conceive, of Far Eastern populations. There is nothing very surprising in all this. It is the natural outcome of contact with the West, the spread of civilisation, of the growth of education, and of the policy—as I think, the very wise and dignified policy—of not allowing subject races to remain ignorant in order that they may be more easily governed. But it must all give cause for serious reflection. I do not think it gives cause for grave anxiety, but it certainly makes it incumbent that those nations which have possessions in the East should exercise even greater care, watchfulness, and circumspection than, perhaps, at any other period of their history. Notably, my Lords, I think it is impossible to foretell what will be the result of the ferment which is now going on in the mind of Far Eastern populations, more especially as the principle of nationality appears to some extent to have taken root in the East and to have taken the place of those bonds which have hitherto bound Eastern populations together. But, I think, one conclusion may be drawn with safety, and that is that those mutual jealousies and rivalries of European nations brought in contact with Eastern nations has enormously increased the difficulty of dealing with all these Eastern problems. Look at what happened but a short time ago in Morocco. There the misgovernment of an Oriental State brought about tension between two of the great Powers of Europe which was as one time fraught with some danger to the peace of Europe. Then there was the case of Macedonia. In that country, the only method it has been possible to devise to rectify some of the worst features of an Oriental State has been to bring into existence the particularly cumbersome and inconvenient machinery of internationalism, but without much success. Then there is the case of Persia. In spite of the criticism of Lord Curzon, I cannot help feeling that there is a good deal of force in the remark made by the noble Marquess a few days ago that the effect of this Agreement has already produced a very satisfactory effect in Persia. I cannot help thinking that if it had not been for that treaty there might have already been a state of considerable tension between this country and Russia. No field is left open for the exercise of that art in which astute Oriental statesmen excel—the art of sowing discord between two European nations. Let us turn our eyes to the Congo. In circumstances which have not arisen, and, I trust will not arise, the rights and interests of the various nations of Europe may throw considerable difficulties in the way of introducing an improved system of government into that sorely tried country.

A couple of years ago I wrote a despatch to the Foreign Office, in which I dwelt upon the dangers of the Pan-Islamist movement in Egypt. Some thought the dangers exaggerated, and the rapidity with which the movement was coped with certainly gave some colour to that view. But I much doubt whether I did exaggerate. It appears to me that what is known as the Sinai Peninsula incident was like a vivid picture flashed suddenly on the political screen by a magic lantern. It showed with what haste race hatred can be stirred up, and it gave a very striking, though very brief, glimpse of the real difficulties that underlie all those problems of Oriental government. The conclusion at which I arrive is that anything that can be done to mitigate the inevitable risk arising from the jealousy of European Powers on Eastern questions should be welcome. I welcome this Agreement with Russia, not only because I think it conductive to the immediate peace in that part of the world, but also because it is of a nature to facilitate our dealings with those other European problems in which this country is and must always remain so closely interested.

*The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord Fitzmaurice): My Lords, the subject which is engaging your Lordships' attention to-night has been introduced by a noble Lord who, perhaps, more than any other man in this country has a right to speak and be heard on this subject. Long before the noble Lord had attained the high position which he now occupies amongst the statesmen of this country he had already made himself famous as the author of a book on Persia, which still retains its position as a classic. Succeeding him in this debate we had a few, but valuable, words from another noble Lord who is specially fitted to give a judgment upon a question which is one of politics affecting the continents of Europe, of Asia, and of Africa.

Following these noble Lords in the debate I feel that my claims on your Lordships' attention can be comparatively small; but, on the other hand, I feel that I am defending a treaty which I am glad to think has not been assailed in any of its larger and more general features. I was glad that the noble Lord began his speech by admitting that this treaty has been received on the whole with a favourable verdict in almost every quarter—not only in this country but elsewhere. I am bound to say that as the noble Lord proceeded, perhaps, some of his criticisms went some way towards depreciating the value of the rather full favour with which his opening sentences were charged. But I make no complaint of that, because undoubtedly a treaty of this kind ought to be discussed and criticised; and I can hardly imagine any place where such criticism is more proper or likely to be more valuable than in your Lordships' House.

It is within the knowledge of all those who have read this treaty that it relates to three countries in particular—to Persia, Afghanistan, and Tibet; but the document must be judged as a whole. That need is clearly stamped on the face of it. If that were not so we might have attempted, possibly in some respects successfully, to have negotiated particular conventions; but, in order to deal with the large issues which were involved, it was deemed desirable—and so far there has been no criticism—to deal with all these three countries and the questions to which their position gave rise in one document.

Persia.

I desire to follow the noble Lord in the order of his criticism. Not unnaturally he turned first to Persia. In his work on Persia the noble Lord quoted a passage from a well-known work of one of his most distinguished predecessors in this field of literature, Sir Henry Rawlinson, who said it was desirable in discussing Persia to remind yourself that you were not dealing with the Persia of Darius nor even the Persia of Shah Abbas the Great, but with a very different and much more humble order of events. The history of Persia has undoubtedly been a melancholy one. We know that at the time of the Crimean War there was a brief moment when perhaps there was some hope of permanent reform. A very distinguished man, Mirza Takki Khan, appeared in Persia and attempted to reform the country, but, as usual, intrigues, hostility, and bribery were too much for him, and in a very short time he was driven from power. His remarkable career has quite recently been recalled to the memory of those who take an interest in this question, by General Gordon, in a paper which he read the other day before the Asiatic Society.

Since those days Persia's progress has been a progress downhill. Many plans for its regeneration, political and financial, have been put forward. There was a time, when the Minister at Teheran was Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, when a policy was set on foot of which the basic idea was that Persia might be regenerated by the free application of British capital, and every encouragement was given to British enterprise to adventure itself in the country. No doubt some results can be shown to have arisen from that policy. The Imperial Bank of Persia is the most solid as it was the earliest result of that policy. But there was really not much else to show. Certain concessions for making roads have been obtained; and there have been concessions in the western parts of Persia to syndicates for developing the extraordinary wealth of the country in mineral oil. But the general results in what I may call the "concession" period were disappointing.

After a short interval there came another period, which may be described as the period when foreign countries entered upon a policy of rival loans. Persia was continually approaching other countries in her financial difficulties as lenders. But ultimately the conviction forced itself on the mind of every diplomatist and statesman of this country that something different from the policy of expensive rivalry at the Court of Persia was desirable, and that it would be well to see whether it was not possible to place our relations with Russia in regard to Persia upon a clear and permanent basis. That policy, as the noble Lord who introduced the subject fully acknowledged, is not peculiar to the present Government. Our predecessors originated it. I do not say that in any attempt to justify my case by a *tu quoque* argument. On the contrary, in my opinion the late Government adopted the only course that was open to them, bearing in mind what the situation was. That being so, I have only to say that when we took up the threads of the negotiations between Russia and Great Britain from the hands of our predecessors in office we did so with a full sense of our responsibility, and we proceeded with them on that advice, which, fortunately, is always at the disposal of the Government of this country—the advice of our skilled permanent officials.

In these negotiations the interest of the India Office is almost as great as the interest of the Foreign Office. The line of demarcation of these two offices, in Persia particularly, has been a subject of difficulty with every Government for many years; and there can be no negotiations by the Foreign Office in regard to Persia or Afghanistan in which the India Office does not play first fiddle as much as second. It is hardly necessary for me to say that there are officials in the India Office of unrivalled experience in these matters; and, with regard to the Foreign Office, I would remind the House that our Ambassador at St. Petersburg, Sir Arthur Nicolson, is a man of very considerable Persian experience, and that the principal adviser of the Government at home is Sir Charles Hardinge, who, before he entered the Foreign Office, had also served in Persia and at St. Petersburg. Therefore I pass by any suggestion that the Government entered on these negotiations blindly or without taking expert advice.

It is said that the line of the Russian sphere has been drawn too far south. That objection was put forward, almost immediately on the publication of the treaty, by a very eminent foreigner and a sincere friend of this country, M. Vambéry, who in a series of letters to the English Press, in the *Morning Post*, embodied exactly the same argument which has been put forward by Lord Curzon in his able and interesting speech. Both the noble Lord and M. Vambéry argue their case as if a line drawn across Persia was a line which would enable Russia, or Persia under Russian influence, to establish Custom-houses along its whole length and levy adverse duties on British goods. But the articles of the treaty, whether they relate to the Russian sphere or the British sphere, are limited to the granting of concessions to foreign Governments, or to individuals or companies under the protection of foreign Governments. The ordinary trade of the country will continue exactly as it is now. The noble Lord and M. Vambéry seem to be afraid that something like a movement for tariff reform was going to take place, or had taken place, and that along the line there would be found a chain of Custom-houses with disguised Russian officials levying hostile duties on British goods.

*LORD CURZON OF KEDLESTON: I really am not responsible for the arguments of M. Vambéry, which I have not seen. I am in the recollection of the House that I never said anything about Custom-houses or tariff reform. What I anticipated was our inability to obtain any concession in the future in the Russian sphere

*LORD FITZMAURICE: What I was pointing out was this, that the argument of the noble Lord, which is absolutely identical with that of M. Vambéry, fails, because the line is not a commercial line, and the dangers he anticipates to British trade could only apply were it possible for the Russian Government, or the Persian Government under Russian influence, to set up Custom-houses along the line to keep British trade out. But the clauses of the treaty are not commercial clauses. They were strictly drawn up to show that they related to concessions within certain defined districts. I believe that, taking the line of demarcation as a whole, it is not a concession one way or the other. I defend this line as being, on the whole, a line which recognises existing facts, and not a line which creates any particular right or disability which does not at present prevail. It is said that the line is drawn not ungenerously in the interests of those who under Russian protection may approach the Persian Government for concessions. My answer to that is that the treaty must be judged as a whole. The exact line of demarcation in a matter of this kind must obviously be one of give and take. The real question is whether, taking the treaty as a whole, and admitting that a full recognition is made of Russia's commercial position, corresponding advantages are not obtained by us in the general settlement of all outstanding questions with Russia, in the determination of the condition of rivalry between the two Powers in Asia; and, on the other hand, the obtainment by us of a similar line, though, perhaps, our line is more important from the strategical than from the commercial point of view.

I can state that in 1903 a Departmental Committee sat at the India Office, on which the Foreign Office was represented, and they arrived unanimously at the conclusion that what was essential to the security of British interests was a triangle of territory including Seistan, Kerman, and Bandar Abbas, so as to render it impossible for Russia to construct a railway to Bandar Abbas or any port to the east of Bandar Abbas without our consent. I have great satisfaction in saying that this is the exact line which has been secured. Then there is the argument that we have allowed far too large a number of the routes of trade from the Gulf and from Baghdad with Persia to fall inside the Russian sphere. But, even if that were so, we have got in our hands some of the most important routes—as, for example, those that approach Persia from the south. My reply, generally, is that it was absolutely impossible, bearing in mind the geography of Persia, if we were going to make an arrangement of this kind at all, giving to Russia a sphere in the north, that we should not be exposed to a charge of this kind. Because if you examine these trade routes, even those which enter Persia from the south, you will find that eventually the object of the trader is to get not only to Ispahan, but from the north even to Teheran itself. We are quite justified in this, and the late Government would have adopted a similar course, and would have allowed the northern part of Persia to be within the Russian sphere.

There is another and more particular criticism which has been urged—namely, that it shows a special laxity on our part to have allowed the trade route which comes up from Baghdad, which may be the line of a future railway, and goes on to Kasie-Cherin, Khanikin and Hamadan, to fall within the Russian sphere. I venture to say that if we had attempted to cut that district out of the Russian sphere I should not this evening be defending any arrangement at all. I feel, as did the noble Lord, the disadvantage of discussing these questions without a map. This trade route is one which the Russian Government especially desired to obtain within its sphere, and therefore clearly, unless we were prepared to say that we would not accept the condition at all, and would break off the negotiations, it was certain that that trade route would fall within the Russian sphere. There is yet another argument which I would venture to submit. The trade route going from Baghdad to Khanikin is one along which in all probability a railway will some day be run in connection with the Baghdad Railway.

Whatever our individual views on this question may be, we all know that there is another Power, not Russia, which is taking a great interest in the railway communications in the direction of Baghdad. Undoubtedly, whoever may get a railway concession and execute it to Baghdad will desire to carry it up to the Persian frontier; and if we had interfered so as to prevent the railway beyond falling into Russian hands, then I think, in all probability we would have gratuitously gone out of our way to bring another Power into the field against us, and in that case I am inclined to think that the joint opposition of those two Powers would probably not have been favourable to the general results of our negotiations. But we have not desired in these negotiations to play any hostile part towards any other Power. We have, on the contrary, tried to register existing facts; and we have found in regard to the trade route which runs from Baghdad to the Persian frontier, and from the Persian frontier to the places I have named, that there were other interests already, so to speak, in possession. If I wanted to convince your Lordships how impossible it would have been to have opposed the wish of Russia in this matter, I should only have to show you on the map that the ultimate end of a line on Persian territory from Kasr-i-Shirin is Teheran, and some day or other it is practically certain that the Russian Government will desire that there should be a railway following the existing line of route which has been made by Russian enterprise and money from their northern frontier at Julfa to Teheran, and that the railway from the Persian frontier will therefore some day link up at Teheran with the railway coming from the frontier at the north. I would ask the noble Lord whether he really thinks that, as the Russian interest is naturally so strong on this question, we should have acted wisely if we had risked wrecking the whole negotiation upon it when, as I venture to tell your Lordships, we were certain not to have succeeded.

I wish to put another point about British commerce. The Imperial Bank of Persia is one of the few really successful concerns which have of late years sprung up in Persia, due to British enterprise. There is no body of men more capable of judging whether this arrangement is good or bad; and I am glad to be able to inform your Lordships that the Imperial Bank of Persia has conveyed to the Foreign Office its approval of this treaty, and its belief that it will be most useful in the development of Persia. I am inclined to set the opinions of these hard headed men of business against the fears of M. Vambéry and his school. I remember that more than twenty years ago, when I had to defend in another place another set of negotiations connected with Afghanistan and Persia, at the time of the celebrated Penjdeh incident, the very same school of thinkers who are now predicting evil said that the arrangements then made by Mr. Gladstone and Lord Granville were so foolish that it was quite certain the final knell of English influence in Afghanistan had been sounded. Now that I hear exactly the same criticisms, and from exactly the same people, I am inclined to hope and believe that those who may be so fortunate as to occupy a place in this House at the end of another period of twenty years will find the present prophecies about the decay of our influence in Persia to have been equally groundless.

The noble Lord, I think, has not only misread what may be called the commercial clauses, but he has also overlooked the fact that all existing concessions, even in the Russian area, are specifically protected and maintained, and that therefore, although the future concessions will undoubtedly be to the advantage of the Russian *concessionnaire*, those who have embarked British money in ventures in Persia will not stand to lose. I do not think the noble Lord would really wish me seriously to enter into a defence of the use in the preamble of the words "adjoining or neighbouring." It is certain that a great deal of learning and verbal refinement might be expended upon the question what is exactly meant by those words; but, broadly speaking, I think we should all recognise that the northern provinces of Persia are in the neighbourhood of the Russian frontier, and that it is no unfair definition which has dealt with the particular provinces mentioned by the noble Lord. And I must add that it has never been part of our policy, so far as I know, though the noble Lord seemed to imply it, that the whole of the trade and railway communications of Persia were, in some indirect way, to be liable to control in those parts.

I now pass to the question of Afghanistan. I desire, in the first place, to say, with reference to the assent of the Ameer, that I was a little astonished that the noble Lord, with his great knowledge of Oriental diplomacy, should have said that we ought to have waited for that assent. These are matters which require an appreciation of the ways and methods of Asiatic diplomatists and potentates, and it is not for me to state my opinion on a question of this kind. But I am bound to tell the noble Lord that the opinion of those with whom I have discussed this question does not at all coincide with the view which he has put forward. Undoubtedly it would have run the risk of great delay, considering the leisurely manner in which Oriental diplomacy is invariably carried out. If we had told the Ameer of Afghanistan that we were going to wait an indefinite time, or until he had signified his approval of this long and complicated document, the probability is that noble Lords would not be discussing this question this evening. We would have run the risk of very great delay, valuable time would have been lost; and, considering the grave condition of affairs in Persia, I ask whether noble Lords think that success would have crowned our efforts in the same degree as when we were able to discuss all these questions at Teheran with a Government which was not then in the throes of something like a revolution as it now is? But there were other points which the noble Lord brought up in regard to Afghanistan. He dwelt more particularly upon the undertaking which His Majesty's Government gave in the second article not to annex or to occupy in contravention of our treaty engagements any portion of Afghanistan.

*LORD CURZON OF KEDLESTON: The clause on which I laid stress was the clause in which His Majesty's Government—

> "Engage to exercise their influence in Afghanistan only in a pacific sense, and they will not themselves take, nor encourage Afghanistan to take, any measures threatening Russia."

That was the clause I thought rather ambiguous.

***LORD FITZMAURICE**: I am coming to that. But before the noble Lord arrived at that point, he asked what equivalent we had got for the undertaking not to annex or to occupy in contravention of our treaty engagements any portion of Afghanistan, and he complained that we had not obtained trade advantages in Afghanistan and even in Central Asia. It should be pointed out that there is a complete equivalent given by Russia. Obviously, when Russia gives us a solemn undertaking embodied in a treaty for the first time that she will not interfere with, or try to change the political *status* of Afghanistan, she has given us, as the greater includes the less, a clear and binding engagement that she will not annex or occupy.

The noble Lord next asked what would His Majesty's Government do if there were an act of war and territory were seized in breach of faith. I must, however, absolutely decline to discuss the terms of a treaty, the whole object of which is to maintain peace, on the basis of what would be done in case of war. When the Penjdeh incident took place, Mr. Gladstone summoned Parliament, and asked for a war Vote of—if I remember right—eight millions of money. But our relations with Russia are now such that we need not discuss imaginary Penjdeh incidents. The object of this treaty is to put an end to the condition of affairs out of which the Penjdeh and other incidents grew and endangered peace. Then the noble Lord cavilled at the mention of Russian and Afghanistan authorities and officials, specially designated for the purpose, establishing relations with each other for the purpose of settling local questions. So far back as 1900 there were negotiations between the Russian Ambassador in London and Lord Salisbury in regard to this question, and there never was any unwillingness on the part of His Majesty's Government to entertain the proposal for the establishment of frontier relations. Lord Salisbury, of course, pointed out that it would be a matter to be examined as to what was exactly meant by "local questions," but there was no objection in principle on the part of the late Government to an arrangement of this kind. Then Lord Curzon asked what was meant by commercial agents, and where it was exactly contemplated they should be allowed to go. But the article of the Treaty—it is No. IV.—shows that these details will be matter of negotiation to be arranged between the two Governments, due regard being had to the Ameer's Sovereign rights.

The noble Lord also asked why it was that His Majesty's Government had not included in this arrangement the Persian Gulf. The position of Great Britain in the Persian Gulf is one which has been defined irrevocably by the statements of the noble Marquess, now the Leader of the Opposition, in this House when Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; and it was not our opinion that we should in any way have added strength to those declarations by embracing the Persian Gulf—where this country stands in a peculiar position—in an agreement relating to Persia, Afghanistan and Tibet. On the contrary, we consider that by separating the question of the Persian Gulf we do not weaken our position, but rather strengthen it by making it more plain. We have placed it beyond the smallest doubt that, in regard to the Persian Gulf, we stand exactly where our predecessors stood before us. I confess that the more I examine this question of the Persian Gulf the more convinced I am that we have done wisely in keeping the Persian Gulf outside the terms of this Agreement.

Then Lord Curzon made a point—rather a debating point—as to why we should be so anxious to keep out the Persian Gulf when we brought Tibet into this arrangement. Personally, I am quite unable to see that there is any logical connection between the one set of circumstances and the other. I can hardly imagine anything more absolutely different than the position of Persia, and the Persian Gulf in particular, where we have large interests which we intend to maintain at all hazards, and that of the distant, obscure, and little-known country of Tibet. I will state quite frankly that, whereas in Persia our policy is one of maintaining, to say the least, our existing position, in Tibet, which is remote even from the Empire of India, our policy ought to be a minimising policy, a policy of reducing our engagements to a minimum and, if anything, of drawing back from any policy of adventure that may have been contemplated. In regard to Tibet I was glad to observe that the noble Lord did not renew the charge, which I have seen very often made with regard to this treaty, that we had departed from the policy of our predecessors in office in the Convention with China. I do not wish to labour that point, because I have not been attacked about it here. But I have noticed elsewhere an attack on the Government for having brought China by the treaty of last year into the Tibetan question, which is entirely based upon what appears to be a misrepresentation of a passage in a despatch by my noble friend opposite, in which he alluded to the conduct of the Chinese authorities in regard to a particular matter, quite at the beginning of the troubles in Tibet, and pointed out how difficult it would be at that moment to work through the Chinese authorities. That despatch has been misrepresented as a permanent declaration of policy that in no circumstances would the British Government admit the position of China in Tibet. Passing from that the principal point which the noble Lord brought forward was the fact that we had entered into an agreement with Russia; he asked what had Russia to do with Tibet? Here I think I am engaged in answering, not the Front Bench opposite, but the noble Lord himself; for in the careful study I have made of the question and of the Papers presented to Parliament by the India Office in 1904-5, I think I have detected a certain note of difference between the view of Tibet taken by the noble Lord and that taken by his colleagues. The events connected with the Younghusband Treaty seem to me to point to that. We consider that we have followed in the steps which noble Lords opposite laid down for us. There were negotiations in 1904 between my noble friend and the Russian Ambassador, and in the course of these conversations, which were recorded on both sides, the position of Russia was admitted. Moreover, in a communication that was made in June, 1904, to Count Benckendorff it was distinctly laid down by my noble friend that we were not prepared to establish a permanent mission in Tibet; and that so long as no other Power endeavoured to intervene in the affairs of Tibet, we should not attempt either to annex it, to establish a protectorate over it, or in any way to control its internal administration.

But I am told that we have gone beyond what the late Government did, because we have admitted in this treaty the position of the Buriat pilgrims. These pilgrims and the suspicion attached to them were no doubt one of the primary causes of the troubles in Tibet which ended in the expedition. I venture to say it is idle in diplomacy to try to lay down conditions which cannot be enforced. I ask any man who bears in mind what is the position of the Dalai Lama, and the other representatives of Buddhism in Tibet, and the enormous extent of the unprotected frontiers of Tibet, to consider whether it would have been possible to enforce a clause which provided that under no conditions should pilgrims of that kind go there, even if we had succeeded in inducing the Russian Government to assent to it. Lhasa is a Holy City, and Buddhist pilgrims desire to go to Lhasa from India, from China, and from Russia. If we had attempted to say that in no circumstances would we allow Buddhists from Russia to go to Lhasa, such a clause would not be worth the paper it was written on. The position at Lhasa rather resembles that at Rome. The Dalai-Lhama, like the Pope of Rome, is the head of a religious community, which is, or was, also a political community. Now what would have been thought after 1870, when the terms of a possible "Law of Guarantees" were being discussed between Italy and the Pope, if the Italian Government had said: "Oh yes, we will allow Italian Roman Catholics and even Roman Catholics from France and Austria to visit Rome, because those are adjoining countries; but we will

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forbid English or German or Spanish pilgrims, because presumably among them will be some whose motives for pilgrimage will probably be political rather than religious." I say that such an attempt would have been ridiculous. In Article III. the British and Russian Governments have respectively engaged not to send representatives to Lhasa. That article has been criticised on the ground that we should not have brought Russia into the matter at all. My reply is that His Majesty's Government have only embodied in a more formal document the engagement already practically given to Russia in June, 1904, by our predecessors. In return we have obtained an engagement on the part of the Russian Government that they will not send representatives to Lhasa. His Majesty's Government, in a despatch to the Government of India in December, 1904, had already declared the right of access to Lhasa as inconsistent with their policy; and that was, I think, very wise conduct on the part of the late Government.

I wish to clear up this point, because it is an important one. By Article IX. of the Anglo-Tibetan Convention of 1904, the Government of Tibet engaged that without the previous consent of the British Government no concessions for railways, roads, telegraphs, mining, or other rights should be granted to any foreign Power, or to the subjects of any foreign Power. In the event of consent to such concessions being granted, similar or equivalent concessions were to be granted to the British Government. Then came the Convention with China, in which it was expressly laid down that this prohibition should not apply to Chinese. The effect was to provide that Chinamen in Tibet should not be regarded as foreigners. Finally, by the Anglo-Russian Convention we have simply extended to Russia the undertaking to which we had already bound ourselves by an international instrument, the treaty with China, as well as by the verbal promises to which I have referred. Article IX. of the Convention of 1904 simply amounts to a self-denying ordinance, which affected ourselves as well as other Powers, and this was, I think, fully acknowledged in the conversations between my noble friend and the Russian Ambassador. It was fully understood that it was not the desire of the British Government in India, any more than it was that of Russia, to take up an adventurous policy in Tibet.

No man has a greater right to speak on all these subjects than Lord Curzon, and when he does so it is the duty of whoever may have the difficult task of replying to him to do so fully. In considering this Convention as a whole, I ask you to take up the newspapers of this evening, and to read the accounts of the agitated and dangerous state of Persia, and, I am sorry to add, of the dangers which have arisen upon the frontier of Turkey and Persia, where something like a state of warfare is actually in existence. We have in Persia at this moment a state, I will not say of revolution, but of serious domestic trouble, and the risk of armed conflict upon that frontier, which for so many years has been a source of diplomatic danger. I ask the House whether—even if every word that the noble Lord (Lord Curzon) has said had been fully justified and I had no answer to it—whether it is not, for reasons given by the noble Earl on the cross benches (Lord Cromer), at least an immense advantage that there is no risk of diplomatic conflict, no risk of further aggravation of those troubles in Persia itself, owing to the fact that Great Britain and Russia have now got an Agreement and a common policy? We know at the Foreign Office how subtle the atmosphere of Oriental diplomacy is, how complicated are the currents, how immensely difficult it is to overcome the delays, which madden the ordinary English diplomatist and often make him despair of a solution. We recognise all that; but we think that this Convention, judged by the standard of peace—and it is by that standard that I ask the House to judge it—has merited what it has received—namely, the applause of the greater portion, as I believe, of the Press of the civilised world; and that it has also merited that which I hope the noble Earl on the cross benches will allow me to say I value almost more than anything—the approval of the Englishman who above all is able to form a judgment upon these things as a whole—namely, the noble Earl—who for so many years has stood across "the backbone of three continents" (to employ the phrase which Prince Bismarck used in conversation with Lord Ampthill), and, standing there and judging of the whole of these complicated questions as a statesman acquainted with Europe, with Africa, and with Asia, has told the House that he also, estimating this Convention by the same standard, has judged it, and has approved it.

*LORD LAMINGTON: My Lords, I do not think that any Member of your Lordships' House objects to the Convention in principle. The only criticism that has been directed against it is in regard to details. We have for years past deplored the lack of agreement with Russia in regard to Persia; and I think we must allow the noble Lord who has just sat down the satisfaction of thinking that this Convention may have contributed to remove difficulties that might otherwise have arisen between ourselves and Russia in regard to the troubles now taking place in Persia.

But when we come to the details of the Convention, I confess I do not think that the noble Lord the Under-Secretary of State has met all the criticisms which were directed by Lord Curzon. Take, for instance, Lord Curzon's criticism as to the absence of any reference to the Ameer of Afghanistan with regard to this Convention. The excuse is that there might have been considerable delay had the Ameer been consulted. But it seems to me there will have been more serious delay if the whole of the treaty with regard to Afghanistan falls to the ground owing to objections that may possibly be raised by His Majesty. Last year we received His Majesty the Ameer in India with every possible honour, with honours, perhaps, in excess of what might have been paid to an European monarch; and yet the concluding stage of an agreement which vitally concerns and affects the interests of his country was arrived at without taking him into consultation. From what I know of the vigorous personality and straightforward characteristics of His Majesty, I cannot but fear that he may regard our action as an offence and slight upon himself.

Then, again, with regard to the criticism that we have placed ourselves at a disadvantage in Afghanistan in regard to our undertaking to exercise nothing but a pacific interest. The noble Lord who initiated this discussion mentioned the fact that Russia has her armed forces up to the very gates of Afghanistan, and that we, by our undertaking with Afghanistan, have always promised to protect that country from aggression. How are we to maintain that attitude if our policy in that country is to be purely pacific? I do not think the illustration of the Penjdeh incident at all meets the case. That was a sudden and unexpected event. I imagine that what Lord Curzon meant was that at times when preparations may be made to meet a possible warlike operation we should be debarred from taking any action under this convention. I do not think the noble Lord made any reference to the clause which gives facilities for the appointment of commercial agents in Afghanistan.

*LORD FITZMAURICE: Yes, I mentioned that

*LORD LAMINGTON: I did not catch the noble Lord's remarks on that point. The natural argument is that if Russia is to be allowed to have commercial agents in Afghanistan, we ought to be allowed to have commercial agents in Turkestan, where we have a very great trade. Many questions connected with the property of our Indian subjects arise there, more particularly in the case of deceased persons. Fraud is not infrequently perpetrated, and the property of deceased persons is seized by some so-called official, and, despite the very good offices of our Embassy at St Petersburg, very often redress has not been obtained. If the noble Lord had said something about the possibility of our having commercial agents established in Turkestan, it would have been some set off against the disabilities we have placed upon ourselves in this Convention in regard to Afghanistan.

As to our position in Persia—the most vital matter of all—I hail with delight the statement by the noble Lord that His Majesty's Government fully sustain the strong declaration made in 1903 by the noble Marquess who now leads the Opposition in your Lordships' House. That is eminently satisfactory. At the same time it seems a very specious argument to say that it has placed our paramountcy in the Persian Gulf in a better position by eliminating all reference to it from this Agreement. It seems extraordinary that, when you are entering upon the most important convention, perhaps, of modern days, a particular item of the greatest importance to ourselves should be excluded from consideration on account of its importance. What is the position of the neutral zone? I presume the neutral zone in Persia is practically in the same position as the whole of Persia was previous to this Convention. In 1903, in another place, Sir Edward Grey, speaking upon our position in Persia, said that when it was declared that we and the Russian Government were equally bound to respect the integrity of Persia, he feared this meant that they were bound to respect a vanishing quantity, and that the time might come when they would find themselves respecting nothing at all. If this neutral zone is really on the same footing under this Convention, then I am afraid that, despite the frontier line that has been drawn, it is equally liable to disappear. How are you going to preserve the integrity of Persia better now than before this Agreement was entered into? The only difference is that the Russian line has been drawn further south; and I think Lord Curzon very well put the possibility of what will happen when Russia extends her railways down to the limit set forth in this Agreement.

I do not think the argument that Persia is not the only country possessing a seaboard in the Persian Gulf is at all a fair one. The Chancellor of the Exchequer remarked the other day that Turkey had also to be considered. I think that is a very misleading statement. At the present moment Turkey has only one small port at the head of the Gulf, and, though she has a seaboard nominally 200 miles in length, that seaboard is not an integral portion of the territory of Turkey. This territory has only been acquired within the last 40 years, and therefore the claims of Turkey to any coast-line in the Gulf is very slender indeed, and it is not long ago that we protested successfully against any further development of Turkish activity in the peninsular of El Katir. That shows that we have only recognised very slightly the dominion of Turkey in the Gulf; and it must be remembered that neither Turkey nor Persia would really have owned a single mile of coast-line had it not been for our past action in bringing about order throughout the whole of these coast-lines. I think it is to be regretted that this opportunity was not taken to safeguard to the utmost possibility our paramountcy in the Gulf.

The whole object of a question which I raised in 1903, was to try to arrive at some understanding with Russia; but it never struck me that in any arrangement which would be arrived at we should omit consideration of what should be the most vital element of agreement. I regret it, not merely from the commercial point of view, but also because of its most serious importance in regard to the defence of India. That is really the crux of the position, for the Persian Gulf is but one link in the long line of defence which extends from Egypt Eastward. I imagine that the large amount of money that has been spent in order to secure control in the Gulf has not been expended solely for commercial interests, but also because it is one of the most important positions in the safeguarding of our Indian Empire. I congratulate the noble Marquess the Leader of the Opposition once more on having made that very distinct pronouncement in 1903. It obviously has borne good fruit, as it has been endorsed to-day by the representative of His Majesty's Government. I also think it is very well indeed that this question has been raised by such a pastmaster in all these questions of the outlying frontiers of India as Lord Curzon. The question cannot be raised too often, because we want to bring home to the people of this country the vital importance that these matters have upon the safeguarding of our Indian Empire. I should liked to have touched upon other points, but owing to the lateness of the hour I will not do so. But I wish to say that I hail with the utmost satisfaction the very distinct statement made by the noble Lord the Under-Secretary, and I only hope it will be made good in the future One other point that I would refer to before sitting down, is that from the strategical aspect a mistake seems to have been made. The land frontier of Beluchistan is safeguarded, but the line should at least have been taken to Lingah and not to Bundar Abbas. Lingah is only some ninety miles on, but the islands of Kishm and Hedjain would then have been included beyond dispute, and these islands command the entrance to the Gulf. We have a post marked British on Kishm and it would be interesting to know what the Government have to say in this matter.

Moved, "That the debate be adjourned."—(*Lord Sanderson.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to, and debate adjourned accordingly to Monday next.

ISLAND OF VATERSAY.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: My Lords, I rise to move for a Return of the correspondence between Lady Gordon Cathcart and the Secretary for Scotland and the Lord Advocate, with reference to the seizure and occupation of the Island of Vatersay by squatters, and with regard to proposed future arrangements in that island. In the spring of last year—I think in the month of April—certain cotters and fishermen started from the Island of Barra and landed upon and seized, and are still in occupation of, the Island of Vatersay. The Lord Advocate, when asked for permission to put the Trespass Act in force, declined to give that permission, and from that time to this the Government have done nothing with regard to replacing the persons who own the property in possession of their property. A long correspondence ensued between Lady Gordon Cathcart, to whom Vatersay belongs, and the Lord Advocate and the Secretary for Scotland. I have seen the correspondence, and it seems to be of such a character as to deserve, and even require, the attention of Parliament. I therefore beg to move the Motion standing in my name.

Moved, "That there be laid before the House a Return of the correspondence between Lady Gordon Cathcart and the Secretary for Scotland and the Lord Advocate, with reference to the seizure and occupation of the Island of Vatersay by squatters; and with regard to proposed future arrangements in that island."—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

LORD HAMILTON OF DALZELL: My Lords, I hope the noble Earl will not think that I am in any way discourteous if I do not discuss this question at the present moment. I understand it is not his desire that I should do so, as he proposes to raise the matter at a later date. I have only to say that the correspondence and the Papers for which he asks will be laid on the Table as soon as possible.

On Question, Motion agreed to and ordered accordingly.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Eight o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 6th February, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

ASSASSINATION OF THE KING OF PORTUGAL AND DUKE OF BRAGANZA.

The Comptroller of the Household reported His Majesty's Answer to the Address of the 4th day of this instant February, as followeth—

"I thank you for your loyal and dutiful Address.

"I unite with you in the expression of indignation and deep concern at the tidings of the Assassination of My illustrious ally and friend, His Majesty the King of Portugal and the Algarvés, and of His Royal Highness the Duke of Braganza; and I will not fail to convey to King Manuel your sentiment of abhorrence at the perpetration of such a crime, and your sympathy with His Majesty and the Members of the Royal Family of Portugal, and with the People of that country."

PETITIONS.

LICENSED PREMISES (EXCLUSION OF CHILDREN).

Petitions for legislation: From Bristol; Chorlton-cum-Hardy; Exmouth (five); Heaton Moor; Herne Bay; Howden; Knottingley; Lee and Lewisham;

Leicester (two); Levenshulme; Manchester; Manchester and Salford; Newbury; Old Trafford (two); Penarth; Pontefract; Poynton; South Manchester; South Reddish; Wigan; and Withington (two); to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (ENGLAND).

Petition from Billy Row, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

OLD-AGE PENSIONS.

Petition from Yorkshire, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY.

Petitions for legislation: From Anchor of Hope Lodge; Barking Road; Bath (two); Cleveland; Cumberland and Westmoreland; Ebley; Howden le Wear; Leicester; Oxford; Portsmouth; Rugby; South Lambeth; and Sunbury-on-Thames; to lie upon the Table.

SMALL HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND).

Petition from Uig, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

Petition from Portsmouth, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1887.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 1st February, 1908, granting to Mr. J. G. Holdsworth, Assistant Superintending Engineer, Post Office, a retiring allowance under the Act [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (APPROPRIATION ACCOUNTS).

Appropriation Accounts presented, for the year ending 31st March, 1907, together with the Reports of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon and certain Reports upon Store Accounts [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 37.]

NAVY (APPROPRIATION ACCOUNT).

Copy presented, of the Appropriation Account of the Navy for 1906–7, with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon, and upon the Store Accounts of the Navy [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 38.]

TRANSVAAL COLONY (CIVIL SERVANTS DISMISSED).

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 27th August, 1907; *Mr. Wedgwood*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 39.]

TELEGRAPHS (FOREIGN WRITTEN PRESS TELEGRAMS).

Copy presented, of the Telegraph (Foreign Written Press Telegrams) Amendment (No. 1) Regulations, 1907, dated 15th December, 1907 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1907–8).

Estimates presented, of the Further Sums required to be voted for the Service of the year ending 31st March, 1908 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 35.]

CONSOLIDATED FUND.

Abstract Account presented, showing the issues made from the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom in the financial year ended 31st March, 1907, for the Interest and Management of the Debt, for the Civil List, and for all other Issues in the financial year for services charged directly on the said Fund; with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 36.]

DUCHY OF CORNWALL.

Account presented, of the Receipts and Disbursements of the Duchy of Cornwall for the year ended 31st December, 1907 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Prison Officers' Pay.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures he has taken in reference to the petition of the prison officers in His Majesty's local prisons asking that they may be placed upon the same scale of pay as the officers of His Majesty's convict prisons; and, if any, whether they have satisfied the legitimate representations of these officers.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The petitions to which the hon. Member refers were most carefully considered by myself and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and, as a result, improvements in the pay of the local prison officers were granted which were, I believe, amply sufficient to satisfy their legitimate claims. These improvements, which I explained in answer to Questions asked in this House on 15th November, 1906, and on 11th April last, included an increase of the maximum salary of the several warder ranks, an increase of annual increments of pay, and, in a large number of cases, increased lodging allowances.

Drumandoora Outrage.

MR. WALROND (Devonshire, Tiverton): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the fact that the house of a small farmer named Macnamara, residing at Drumandoora, has been twice fired into lately; and whether the police have made any arrests in connection with these outrages.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I refer to my Answer to a similar Question put by the hon. Member for Mid-Armagh on Monday last.

Cattle-drives in Ireland—County Dublin, Leitrim, and Roscommon.

MR. WALROND: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on 6th December there were extensive cattle-drives at Ballyhealy, county Dublin, at Mr. Flanagan's farm near Ross, county Roscommon, and from the property of Mr. Scanlon at Leitrim; whether the police were employed in protecting these farms; and whether there have been any arrests.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The police have no information that any cattle-drive has taken place at Ballyhealy, county Dublin. On 6th December, nineteen cattle were found to have been driven off Mr. Flanagan's farm at Ross, county Sligo, and on 3rd December it was found that twenty cattle had been driven off Mr. Scanlon's farm at Leitrim, county Roscommon. These two farms had received attention from police patrols, but policemen were not constantly employed in protecting the farms. No arrests have been made in these cases.

Galway Cattle-drive.

MR. WALROND: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any arrests have been made for driving the cattle of Mr. Quinn from the lands of Ragaculla, near Milltown, county Galway, on 4th December; and whether any police were employed in protecting the same.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The police authorities inform me that Mr. Quinn's cattle were not driven from his land. The only foundation for the Question appears to be that on the date mentioned a police patrol visited the farm for the protection of the cattle.

Irish University Bill.

MR. RAWLINSON (Cambridge University): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a speech of the Provost of Trinity College, Dublin, at Manchester, on 5th December last, in reference to a forthcoming Irish University Bill; whether the speech was made with his authority; and whether the terms of such speech, or any and what parts of it, were submitted for his approval before the speech was delivered.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I call the hon. Member's attention to a letter, published in *The Times* and other newspapers of 4th February, from the Provost of Trinity College, Dublin, which will give him all the information he is entitled to. I never asked the Provost to make any speech, and had no desire that he should do so ; but I told him that if he did make a speech he was at liberty to state that the proposed Government measure left Trinity College alone.

Foreign Army Horseshoes.

MR. J. D. WHITE (Dumbartonshire): To ask the Secretary of State for War what were the amounts of the purchases of Foreign-made horseshoes and nails made by the War Office in the years 1903 and 1904, respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary-Haldane.*) In 1902–3 orders for 298,600 pairs of shoes and 46,670 nails, costing the sums of £6,790 and £12, respectively, were placed abroad. In 1903–4 orders for 292,000 pairs of shoes and 19,964,000 nails, costing the sums of £8,355 and £2,312 3s. 8d., respectively, were placed abroad. In 1904–5 no orders for shoes and nails were placed abroad.

South African War Courts Martial.

MR. J. WARD (Stoke-on-Trent) : To ask the Secretary of State for War the number of soldiers who were in prison on 31st December, 1907, under sentence of court martial ; and whether any, and, if so, how many, were imprisoned by field courts martial in the South African War.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) 177 soldiers were in prisons on 31st December last under sentence of court martial, of whom only one was imprisoned by order of field court martial in the South African War.

Army Courts Martial.

MR. J. WARD : To ask the Secretary of State for War how many general and district courts martial were held during the year 1907 ; how many soldiers were tried by such courts ; what was the number of acquittals and convictions ; and what were the terms of imprisonment inflicted.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The proceedings of all the courts martial held during the year 1907 have not yet been received, and I am not, therefore, in a position at present to give the information required.

Reservists in the Colonies.

MR. WALROND : To ask the Secretary of State for War how many reservists are now residing respectively in Canada, South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand ; and to what arms the reservists in question belong.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The detailed figures are too long to read out to the House, but I will have them printed and circulated with the Votes. The totals are as follow—

Canada - - - -	3,372
South Africa - - -	656
Australia - - -	120
New Zealand - - -	68

Lee-Enfield Rifles.

MR. COURTHOPE (Sussex, Rye): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the conversion of long Lee-Enfield Rifles provided for in the Estimates of 1907 has been completed ; and when, and to what units, the first issue of the converted rifles will take place.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The conversion of the long Lee-Enfield rifles provided for in this financial year will not be completed until the next financial year. About 3,000 will be completed this year. No issues have as yet been arranged, and none can be made until personal equipment for carrying ammunition in chargers is available. It is, however, not desirable to make any issue of the converted rifles until a sufficient number is in store to allow of its being carried out rapidly and continuously.

Gloucestershire Militia.

MR. HICKS BEACH (Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury): To ask the Secretary of State for War on what grounds the 4th Militia

Battalion of the Gloucestershire Regiment has been ordered to disband and the 3rd battalion of the same regiment has been retained; when, according to the Return [Cd. 3364, of 1907], there were wanting 443 rank and file to complete the establishment of the 3rd battalion, and only 118 to complete that of the 4th battalion.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The question of the retention of Militia battalions for the Special Reserve was considered on the grounds of their suitability to fulfil the administrative conditions which will be in future required of the majority of the Special Reserve battalions. The 3rd battalion of the Gloucester regiment, being at the depot, was accordingly retained.

Sailors and Vaccination.

Mr. CROOKS (Woolwich): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to difficulties that have arisen in obtaining the benefits of the Vaccination Act, 1907, in cases where the father of a child has been personally precluded from making a statutory declaration in consequence of absence from England on business as a sailor or otherwise at the time of the birth of his child and for the four months afterwards allowed by the Act in which the statutory declaration is to be made; and whether he will consider the advisability of taking steps, by legislation or otherwise, to enable under such circumstances the wife to make the necessary statutory declaration, under the provisions of Section 35 of the Vaccination Act, 1867, in the absence of her husband.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) My attention has not been called to difficulties of the kind mentioned since the passing of the Act of last session. The Law Officers advised in 1898 that, under ordinary circumstances, the father was the only person who could obtain certificate of conscientious objection, and a similar view would no doubt apply to the making of a declaration under the recent Act. I am not empowered to decide whether, in circumstances such as those mentioned in the Question, the mother would be the person competent to make the declaration; but it seems to me that, if she did so, proceedings ought not to be taken against the father.

Berlin Unemployed.

Mr. PIKE PEASE (Darlington): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that at a meeting of the Berlin Stadtverordenetenversammlung on Friday last the number of unemployed in Berlin was officially stated to be 30,000; and whether he can state how this compares with the present number of unemployed in London.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) I understand that the statement mentioned appeared in a German newspaper, but I do not know whether it was official. There is no Return of the total number of unemployed persons in London at the present time, but I am informed that the number of persons registered by the London Distress Committees between 14th October last and 31st January was 25,561. Some of these have, however, since found work. There were 5,406 persons on the register of employment exchanges in London at the end of December, and the Returns made to the Board of Trade by various trades unions show that the number of members of those unions who were out of employment at that date was 5,581. I am not in a position to state how far persons are included in more than one of these numbers. I should add that a trustworthy comparison between London and other capitals in respect of this matter cannot well be made unless it could be shown that the statistics were compiled on the same basis.

Extinction of Licences.

Mr. CHARLES ROBERTS (Lincoln): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion does the number of on-licences extinguished in each year under the Licensing Act 1904, bear to the total number of on-licences in England and Wales; and what does the total reduction of such on-licences work out to on the average per licensing district of England and Wales.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The answer to the first part of this Question is shown in the following table—

Year.	Total number of On-licenses on 1st January.	Total number of On-licenses extinguished under the compensation provisions of The Licensing Act, 1904.	Proportion per cent.
1905	99,478	184	·18
1906	98,894	885	·89
1907	97,554	1,600*	1·64
	Total - -	2,669*	

* Approximate figure.

As regards the second part of the Question, if the figures 2,669 are divided by the total number of licensing districts in England and Wales the result is 2·65.

Licence Compensation.

MR. MASTERMAN (West Ham): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether his attention has been called to a case in which the amount of compensation money payable under the Licensing Act, 1904, was determined by the Commissioners of Inland Revenue in pursuance of Rule 31 of the rules made by the Secretary of State under Section 6 of the Licensing Act, 1904, and in which the Commissioners had issued their certificate of award as to the amount to be paid to the persons interested, and in which, on receiving notice of an intention to appeal to the High Court against such award, the Commissioners issued a new award; and whether he proposes to take any steps by legislation or otherwise to prevent such action in the future.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) I do not know to what specific case my hon. friend refers, but I am informed that there are not infrequent instances of an award by the Commissioners of Inland Revenue being reconsidered in the light of new circumstances, fuller information, and so forth. It is intended to deal with the whole subject of compensation in the forthcoming Licensing Bill.

Berlin Strikes.

MR. LEVERTON HARRIS (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): To ask the President of the Board of Trade, whether he has any official information showing how far the present unemployment in Berlin is due to strikes in the building and timber trade; and whether he can state how many of those at present tabled as unemployed belong to these trades.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) So far as I am aware there is no strike at present in the building or wood-working trades of Berlin, but there is a large amount of unemployment resulting partly from disputes occurring last year and partly from the high rate of interest ruling for loans to builders. Figures published by the Berlin Trades Council, however, indicate that of the total unemployed membership of trade unions on 15th January making returns, about one-half consisted of building and wood-working operatives. I may add that the percentage of trade union members returned as unemployed on that date to the Berlin Trades Council was 14·1.

Unemployment Returns.

MR. LEVERTON HARRIS: To ask the President of the Board of Trade, what is the percentage of unemployment shown by the latest official Returns of Germany; and what was the amount of unemployment in the United Kingdom at approximately the same date.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) It has been repeatedly explained by the Board of Trade that the official Returns of German trade unionists unemployed cannot be properly compared with those of the United Kingdom, because for several reasons the proportion of the unemployed members of trade unions in the United Kingdom who are entitled to unemployed benefit (and so certain to report themselves as unemployed) is much greater than in Germany, where the percentage returned as unemployed is accordingly understated. At the end of December last the official percentage for Germany was 2·6; but for the reasons given above I can quote no comparable figure for the United Kingdom.

Housing of Working Classes in Berlin.

MR. LEVERTON HARRIS: To ask the President of the Board of Trade, whether in connection with the investigations now being made into working class conditions in certain foreign countries, he can state the average number of rooms per working-class family in Berlin.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) The results of the German investigation are not yet available, but the Census of 1900 indicated that the most usual number of rooms occupied by a working class family in Berlin is two.

Scottish Education Department.

MR. GULLAND (Dumfries, Burghs): To ask the Secretary for Scotland whether premises in Edinburgh have been taken for the accommodation of the Scottish Education Department; and whether these will in future be the headquarters of the Department.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) Since 1904 an Assistant Secretary of the Department has been stationed in Edinburgh with great advantage to the work of the Department, as it has enabled many questions outwith the sphere of the inspecting staff located throughout Scotland, but yet not important enough to be made the subject of special reference to the Department, to be disposed of by personal interview. The only accommodation available for the use of this officer hitherto has been a room in the Royal Scottish Museum, which has proved to be unsuitable in many ways, both as affording no accommodation for an adequate clerical staff, and as being inconvenient for the reception of deputations. There are also other special officers of the Department stationed in Edinburgh, for example, the Accountant of the Department and the Consulting Architect. It has been thought expedient to bring these various officers together, and to put at the disposal of the Assistant Secretary an adequate staff for dealing with those sections of the Department's work for which he is responsible in the first place. Premises suitable for housing this staff and for the reception of deputations have been found by the Office of Works at 14, Queen Street, and will be in the occupation of the Department from Whitsunday next. They will also be used by the Vice-President and by the Secretary of the Department for the purpose of receiving deputations or for transacting business in other ways as occasion may arise. These premises will admit of further transference of clerical work from London to Edinburgh from time to time as that may be found expedient and possible, but it is not possible even were it desirable, that the whole work of the Department should be transferred to Edinburgh at present; and the headquarters of the Department will, therefore, continue to be in London. The Edinburgh office will be in no sense a separate office but will deal, under the general direction of the Secretary of the Department, with such parts of the work as it may be found most convenient from time to time to entrust to the staff stationed in Edinburgh.

Nith Fishery.

MR. GULLAND: To ask the Secretary for Scotland, whether he has received from the Nith Fishery Board a petition asking him to extend for a fortnight the fishing in the Nith; and, if so, whether he can yet give his decision.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) This petition was received too late to permit its request being considered as applying to 1907, and it is now under consideration with a view to the current year. If my hon. friend will repeat his Question, say, in a month's time, I shall hope to be able then to give him a reply.

Local Government Finance.

MR. BARNARD (Kidderminster): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he will give the amounts and percentages, according to the latest year available, corresponding with the amounts and percentages of the aggregate local receipts and expenditure in England and Wales for the year 1868, as appearing at page 6, of the Return on Local Taxation prepared by the late Lord Goschen in 1870, and ordered to be reprinted in 1893 (Cd. 201, 1893).

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) My right hon. friend has asked me to reply to this Question. The aggregate receipts of the local authorities in England and Wales during the year 1904–5 amounted in round numbers to £143,600,000. The following figures show approximately how this sum was raised:—£56,050,000, or 39 per cent., from public rates; £5,450,000, or 3·8 per cent., from tolls, dues, fees, fines, and penalties; £3,200,000, or 2·2 per cent., from sales, rents, and profits of property not elsewhere included; £19,600,000, or 13·7 per cent., from Government Grants and other receipts from Imperial funds; £33,400,000, or 23·3 per cent., from loans; £19,550,000, or 13·6 per cent., from gas, water, electric lighting, tramway, and light railway undertakings; £6,350,000, or 4·4 per cent., from other miscellaneous receipts. Total, £143,600,000 or 100 per cent. Sums received by the Metropolitan Water Board, whether from loans or otherwise are not included in the above amounts. Of the aggregate receipts of £143,600,000, approximately:—£108,600,000, or 75·6 per cent., was expended by authorities acting for acres wholly urban; £5,000,000, or 3·5 per cent., by authorities acting for areas wholly rural; £30,000,000, or 20·9 per cent., by authorities acting for areas partly urban and partly rural. Total, £143,600,000 or 100 per cent. I may mention that in the above statement county councils (other than the London County Council) and drainage boards are, as in the Local Taxation Returns, treated under the head of authorities acting for areas which are partly urban and partly rural. The expenditure of harbour authorities is included in that of urban authorities.

Income-Tax Relief.

MR. CONDON (Tipperary, E.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that a number of income-tax payers entitled to relief on earned income under The Finance Act, 1907, and who were not aware that 30th September was the last day for sending in claims, have therefore lost the benefit of that relief; and whether, as that was the first year in which the Act came into force, he will extend the time for sending in such claims this time to 1st March next.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) It is expressly provided by Section 19 (4) of the Finance Act of last session that the allowance in respect of earned income shall only be given if claimed before 30th September. This provision was necessary for administrative reasons, and ample notice of the necessity for making the claims before 30th September was given in my Budget Speech on 18th April last, public attention being also frequently called to it by observations in the Press during the summer, as well as by church door notices, and, wherever practicable, by personal intimation to individual taxpayers by the Revenue authorities in August after the Act became law. In view of these facts, and of the explicit statutory provision already referred to, it is impossible to admit claims which have been delayed beyond 30th September by the taxpayer's, or his agent's, carelessness or inadvertence; but in order that as little hardship as possible may be inflicted as a result of the taxpayer's unfamiliarity with the new machinery, instructions have been given that the expression, however informal, to the surveyor of taxes within the statutory time-limit of an intention to claim the allowance shall be treated as a "claim" within the meaning of the section, and further, that special consideration should be shown in cases in which the delay was wholly due to causes, such as prolonged illness, which are shown to be outside the taxpayer's own control.

Monarch Laundry Company.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH (Fermanagh, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he is aware that the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies in Ireland, having had the original deed of assignment of premises in Belfast from Messrs. F. A. and G. A. Brittain to the Monarch Laundry Company, Limited, lodged with him by mistake for a copy, refuses to give up the original deed, or allow a copy to be substituted, though there appears to be no statutory requirement that he should have either deed or copy; will he state why the deed is retained by the Registrar, and whether there is any reason why it should not be returned to the company.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) On behalf of the Board of Trade, I will answer this Question addressed to my right hon. friend, the Chief Secretary. The Board of Trade have made inquiries, and the facts appear to be as follows: A deed was filed in the ordinary course by the Monarch Laundry Company, Limited, at the Joint Stock Companies Registry in Dublin. Subsequently an application was made for permission to remove the deed and to substitute a copy. The Board of Trade were advised that they ought not to authorise the removal of an original document from the file without an order of a competent Court, and the applicants were so informed.

Irish Teachers and the Licensing Trade.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he will state how many national school teachers in Ireland are, by themselves or their wives, licensed publicans or spirit grocers; whether the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland permit a teacher or his wife to be holder of a licence; and whether they take any effective steps to prevent it.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Commissioners of National Education inform me that they are not aware that any national school teachers, or the wives of such teachers, are licensed publicans or spirit grocers. Teachers are strictly forbidden to keep public-houses or houses for the sale of spirituous liquors, and the Commissioners decline to recognise as a teacher any person whose husband or wife, as the case may be, keeps such a house.

Lurgan Licensing Offences.

MR. J. DEVLIN (Belfast, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the number of prosecutions which have taken place in Lurgan since November last for breaches of the Licensing Acts in regard to *bona fide* travellers, the names of the police engaged in each case, and the number of cases in which the defendants had been convicted.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) Since November last there has been one prosecution against a publican in Lurgan for a breach of the Licensing Acts in regard to *bona fide* travellers, and thirty-three persons found on his premises were also prosecuted. Acting Sergeant W. Sullivan and Constable L. P. Hargaden were the policemen engaged in the prosecutions. The case against the publican was dismissed with a caution by a majority of the justices, and the cases against four of the persons found on the premises were also dismissed; whereupon the summonses in the remaining cases were withdrawn.

Irish Poor Law Officials and Politics.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, if there is any rule or order of the Local Government Board prohibiting Poor Law officials from being members of political associations; and, if so, can he say on what date it was issued.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) There is no rule upon the subject in question, but the Local Government Board, when addressed on the point, have stated that in their opinion Poor Law officials should take no part in political matters beyond recording their votes.

Mansfield Estate, Killygordon.

Mr. C. MACVEIGH (Donegal, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he could state what is the cause of the delay in completing the sale to the tenants on the Mansfield estate, Killygordon, county Donegal, the agreements to purchase having been signed over two years ago, and the sale sanctioned by the Estates Commissioners last June, while the tenants are still paying the old rent; and whether he can say when the sale will be completed.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that there has been no delay in this case which could have been avoided. It is expected that the advances will be made in the course of the present month.

Royal Garrison Artillery.

Mr. PIKE PEASE: To ask the Secretary of State for War what was the number of officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of the Royal Garrison Artillery serving with the colours on the 1st October, 1905, and 1st February, 1908, respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The figures for 1st October, 1905, and 1st January, 1908, are as follows (figures for 1st February, 1908, are not yet available)—

Date.	Officers.	Warrant Officers.	Sergeants.	Trumpeters.	Rank and File.	Total Strength.
1st October 1905 - -	940	113	1,769	253	21,099	24,174
1st January 1908 - -	872	105	1,456	223	15,679	18,335

Brigade of Guards.

Colonel LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): To ask the Secretary of State for War, what was the number of officers, non-commissioned officers, and men, respectively, of the Brigade of Guards on 1st October, 1905, and 1st January, 1908.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The figures are as follows—

Date.	Officers.	Warrant Officers.	Sergeants.	Drummers	Rank and File.	Total.
1st October 1905 - -	305	18	469	185	7,076	8,053
1st January 1908 -	288	16	433	162	6,623	7,522

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Rosyth.

Major ANSTRUTHER-GRAY (St. Andrews Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty how many men are now being employed in the construction of the dock at Rosyth, in what capacity, and at what scale of pay.

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dundee): No work is being done at present on the construction of a dock at Rosyth.

Mr. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham): Has the right hon. Gentleman any idea when any is likely to be done?

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: No, Sir, the plans are in course of preparation.

Major ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: How many men are employed on the plans?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I cannot say.

The Coastguard.

COLONEL SEELY (Liverpool, Abercromby): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he can state when the Coastguard Vote will be taken.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The coastguard service is included in Vote A. and Vote 1., but I am not in a position to state at present when these Votes will be taken.

COLONEL SEELY: And I understand that on that Vote my right hon. friend will be prepared to make a statement?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Yes, I hope so.

Dockyard Petitions.

MR. JENKINS (Chatham): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what grades of workmen employed in His Majesty's dockyards have petitioned for better conditions of service; and whether he can say if the replies to those petitions have been in the affirmative or the negative.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Petitions have been received, as usual, from practically all grades of workmen. The Admiralty decision in all cases will be promulgated at an early date.

Royal Naval Reserve Bonuses.

MR. FFRENCH (Wexford, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is aware that although first-class Royal Naval Reserve men at Rosslare received a bonus of £5 each, the second-class Royal Naval Reserve men, doing the same duty, for the same period and under the same rule of service, received no bonus at all; whether he is aware that great dissatisfaction prevails amongst the latter class; and whether he will consider their claims to a bonus commensurate with their service.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: First-class men, that is men who are specially qualified, can, according to the Regulations, earn a gratuity not of £5 but of £50, in lieu of pension. Second-class men who qualify for the higher rating under the conditions laid down when the new Regulations were introduced in April, 1906, would be entitled to the same privilege.

Kabul River Railway Survey.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if he will inform the House of the circumstances under which a railway survey fifteen miles from Lundi Kotal is being carried on under fire and under protection by several companies of the Khyber Rifles; whether the local tribes object to the construction of the proposed railway and desert their villages; whether it is still proposed to follow the mountain route; whether the proposed cantonment at Torsappah is finally abandoned; whether the survey of the river route is also going on; whether the Afghan and Indian Governments are argeed on the interpretation of the Durand agreement as to the frontier towards Dacca; and whether the hostility of the Mohmands has been overcome.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. MORLEY, Montrose Burghs): A civil engineer was deputed by the Government of India at the end of last October to examine the country within British limits beyond the point in the Kabul river known as "mile 300," construction of a railway to which was sanctioned in July, 1905. The object was to ascertain the best alignment for a prolongation of the line, should such a project be sanctioned. The engineer had an escort of 100 Khyber Rifles. Desultory firing from the left bank of the Kabul river was reported on 27th November, but on the 6th December the local officers reported that the trouble had ceased. There were no casualties. No opposition to the survey was made by the tribes in British territory. The return of the engineer in charge to Peshawur on the completion of his survey was reported on 2nd December. No decision has been arrived at as to the prolongation of the line beyond "mile 300." The proposal for a cantonment at Torsappah may be regarded as finally abandoned. The frontier with Afghanistan towards

Dacca has never been settled, and the surveys have been carefully confined to British territory. There can, of course, be no question of construction, or even surveys in debatable territory till the frontier has been amicably settled with His Majesty the Amir's Government.

Wei-Hai-Wei.

Mr. WEDGWOOD (Newcastle-under-Lyme): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in view of the results of the system of taxation of land values in the German Colony of Kiau Chow, he will consider the advisability of adopting a similar tax in the Colony of Wei-Hai-Wei, in order to make up the annual deficit of £7,000, and so relieve the charge upon the British taxpayer.

The UNDER - SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Mr. Churchill, Manchester, N.W.): There is already a land tax in Wei-Hai-Wei, and I am afraid that the circumstances of Wei-Hai-Wei are so different from those of Kiau Chow that there is little prospect of obtaining any substantial increase from taxation of land in the former.

Mr. WEDGWOOD: What are the differences between the two places?

Mr. CHURCHILL: Oh, they are too numerous to be cited in answer to a Question across the floor.

Flogging of Natives in Zululand.

Sir H. COTTON (Nottingnam, E.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the attention of His Majesty's Government has been drawn to the extensive flogging of natives in Zululand; and whether inquiry will be made as to the number of natives flogged and otherwise punished under the administration of martial law in Zululand during the month of January, and as to the reasons for such treatment.

Mr. CHURCHILL: The attention of the Secretary of State was recently drawn to reports of this kind in the Press, and he made inquiry of the Governor, who replied as follows: "McKenzie reports that during the recent operations by troops in Zululand five natives were tried and sentenced to be flogged." I have not at present material to answer the rest of the hon. Member's Question, but inquiry is being made.

Sir H. COTTON: Is it the case that the floggings have been so numerous as stated?

Mr. CHURCHILL: It was in consequence of the report that appeared in the papers that I telegraphed an inquiry and the answer was that five natives were flogged. If my hon. friend has any special information I will ask the Secretary of State if he will cable a further inquiry.

Taxation in Northern Nigeria.

Mr. WEDGWOOD: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether it was by this Government, and, if so, when, that the caravan and canoe taxes were abolished in Northern Nigeria and replaced by a land value tax; and whether he will inquire as to the desirability of making a similar change in taxation in the northern territories of the Gold Coast.

Mr. CHURCHILL: The decision to abolish the caravan tolls and the canoe licences in Northern Nigeria was taken by Lord Elgin, and received the concurrence of the Treasury in January, 1907. It is not the case that these forms of taxation were "replaced" by a land value tax, as the Land Revenue Proclamation was issued in 1904. The nature of this tax is fully explained in Sir F. Lugard's Memorandum laid before Parliament last year [Cd. 3309]. It is not merely a tax on land values, but includes, with necessary modifications, various forms of tribute formerly exacted by the native emirs. These authorities receive a proportion of the amount thus raised, sometimes a half, or even more; and this is their main, if not their sole source of revenue. The introduction of a similar system in the northern territories of the Gold Coast is not desirable. It would be difficult, if not impracticable, to introduce it. In Northern Nigeria, it was merely a reorganisation of a system to which the people had been accustomed long before the country passed under British control.

Slavery in the East African Protectorate.

SIR C. HILL (Shrewsbury): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what number of slaves have claimed their freedom in the coast strip of the East Africa Protectorate since the issue of the Abolition of the Legal Status of Slavery Ordinance, 1907; what amount of compensation has been awarded to their masters; whether any compensation has been awarded to slaves under Clause 12 of the Ordinance; and, if so, how much.

MR. CHURCHILL: No report has yet been received from the Governor on the working of the Ordinance, but he will be asked to give the desired information, which will then be communicated to the hon. Member.

Concubinage in East Africa.

SIR C. HILL: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the law relating to the rights and duties of concubines, alluded to in Clause 15 of the Abolition of the Legal Status of Slavery Ordinance, 1907, is the same in the Zanzibar territory comprised within the East Africa Protectorate as in other parts of the protectorate; and if not, what is the difference.

MR. CHURCHILL: Outside the coast area a concubine has no rights and is under no obligations as such. The law is unaltered in this respect by the recent Ordinance. Within the ten-mile strip concubinage has hitherto been recognised in the same way as other forms of domestic slavery. This recognition of concubinage is maintained for the present under the Ordinance because of the danger that its abolition would result in a large number of women, now in a *status* which is sanctioned by Mahomedan law and therefore involves no loss of self-respect, being reduced to a life of promiscuous vice in the coast towns. The measure adopted is similar to that which has been found to work satisfactorily in Zanzibar, but its effect is being carefully watched, and if experience should show the necessity for a change the matter will be reconsidered.

Japanese Immigration into Canada.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): On behalf of the hon. Member for Durham, I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, before the Convention of 1906 was signed, whereby Canada adhered to the Treaty of 1894, between Great Britain and Japan, the effect of that treaty, and especially its effect in allowing the unrestricted immigration of Japanese into Canada, had been pointed out to the Canadian Government in any communication from the Imperial Government; what was the nature of such communication; and what was the reply thereto of the Canadian Government.

MR. CHURCHILL: In 1905 when the Canadian Government raised the question of their adherence to the treaty with Japan the late Secretary of State inquired whether they were prepared to adhere to the whole treaty without reserve or wished to adhere subject to similar limitations respecting immigration and other matters to those stipulated when Queensland adhered. The Canadian Government replied that they were prepared to adhere absolutely and without reserve.

Brazilian Tariffs.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if the Republic of Brazil is now giving, or is about to give, a preference of 20 per cent. on all imports of hardware and cutlery from the United States of America; and, in such case, if he will detail what steps His Majesty's Minister at Rio de Janeiro is taking to obtain a similar concession in respect of Sheffield hardware and cutlery, and if they are likely to prove successful.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): I am not aware that 20 per cent. preference has been, or is about to be, accorded to the United States by Brazil on the imports named by the hon. Member for Sheffield. If the hon. and gallant Member will furnish me with any information I will inquire further.

Russian Duties on Indian Tea.

EARL PERCY (Kensington, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Majesty's Government, having decided that they will no longer prohibit the entry into this country of bounty-fed sugar, have addressed any representations to the Russian Government with a view to the removal of the duties originally imposed by them upon imports of Indian tea viâ the Black Sea route, in consequence of the accession of Great Britain to the Brussels Sugar Convention.

SIR EDWARD GREY: Representations were made to the Russian Government a few days ago.

MR. HIGHAM (Yorkshire, W.R., Sowerby) was understood to ask whether there was any truth in the statement that Germany is likely to depart from the Convention?

SIR EDWARD GREY: No, Sir.

Osman Digna and the Dervish Prisoners.

MR. GOOCH (Bath): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will inform the House as to the number and condition of the prisoners of war who, with Osman Digna, have been detained at Damietta since 1899; and whether His Majesty's Government will now extend to Osman Digna and his fellow prisoners the clemency of the Crown and procure their release under such conditions as may be deemed expedient.

SIR EDWARD GREY: Lord Cromer reported on 8th March, 1907, that many of the Dervish prisoners had been released, that only eight of the principal members were still detained and that their wives and families, numbering twenty-three individuals, remained with them. They were treated as political prisoners, were comfortably housed, and well fed. They were not subjected to any severe disciplinary regulations. Their children were being educated. Lord Cromer agreed with Sir Reginald Wingate and Slatin Pasha that it would not at present be desirable to send these men back to the Soudan. Their presence would be dangerous to the peace of the country; whilst on the one hand they would probably, if they returned to the Soudan, become centres of intrigue for the malcontents, on the other hand they would require protection from the very numerous people who are still suffering from the acts of these men and their adherents when they were in power. The question has also been considered by Sir Eldon Gorst, and he entirely concurs in the opinion expressed by Lord Cromer. Till we are convinced that the return of these men to the Soudan would be safe, no other decision can be come to.

Prize Law.

MR. HERBERT (Buckinghamshire, Wycombe): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it is the intention of the Government to appoint a small Committee to draw up a Code of Law or statement of principles of Prize Law as a basis of instructions to the representatives of this country at any international conference assembled for the purpose of arriving at an agreement upon Prize Law.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I cannot at present make any detailed statement as to the course His Majesty's Government will adopt: the whole question is at present engaging the careful consideration of the Departments concerned.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: When are we likely to have the proceedings at the conference. They have been promised and we do not know what was actually done.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I will inquire.

Brussels Sugar Convention.

MR. HERBERT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any Government which was a party to the Sugar Convention postponed the date for ratification of the additional Act until its Parliament should have had an opportunity of discussing the matter; whether there was any, and if so, what, reason why His Majesty's Government fixed a date for ratification of a Convention made after Parliament rose, which precluded all effective discussion by Parliament; and whether he will give an assurance that in all cases where it is possible the date for ratification of all international agreements to which His Majesty's Government is a party shall be fixed at such date as will give Parliament an opportunity of effective criticism.

SIR EDWARD GREY: His Majesty's Government did not fix any date for the ratification; they desired the earliest date, in order that the trade might know as soon as possible what the settlement was to be, but they agreed to the date considered necessary by other Powers who were under a constitutional obligation to bring the matter before their Parliaments. I cannot, with every desire to afford opportunities for discussion, give an assurance such as the hon. Member desires without altering what has hitherto been the constitutional practice. I may, however, remind the hon. Member that the line which His Majesty's Government have followed in the matter was announced on 6th June last.

MR. BOWLES (Lambeth, Norwood): Is it the fact that the Government have ratified the additional Act?

SIR EDWARD GREY: No, Sir, we have not actually deposited the ratification, but we are to do so in a few days.

Santos Consular Report.

MR. FORSTER (Kent, Sevenoaks): On behalf of the hon. Member for West Marylebone, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs why the publication of Consular Report, No. 3592, on Santos for 1905–6, and Report No. 3954, on Cuba for 1906, has been delayed until January, 1908; and whether he will endeavour to secure the more prompt preparation, transmission, and publication of Consular Reports, in view of the great inconvenience caused by the delay to those trading with foreign countries.

SIR EDWARD GREY: With regard to the two Reports mentioned, the delay in their issue was due to the absence of the necessary statistical information and other valid reasons. No effort is spared to effect the issue of these Reports as quickly as possible. It is to be observed however, that it is often impossible for consular officers to obtain in good time the statistics necessary for their compilation. Consular officers have instructions to report by a special despatch any information of importance to British trade, for the use of the Commercial Intelligence Branch of the Board of Trade, and this is constantly done.

Plundering of Armenian Villages.

MR. GOOCH: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has any information as to the plundering of Armenian villages in the region of Diarbekr last November; and whether any representations in regard to the matter have been made to the Porte.

SIR EDWARD GREY: Yes, Sir; His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople reported at the time on the serious situation at Diarbekr. The condition of the whole of Armenia has been engaging the attention of His Majesty's Government, and Sir N. O'Connor has made earnest representations on the subject.

Papers on Armenia.

MR. GOOCH: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will lay Papers in reference to the state of affairs in the Armenian districts of Asia Minor since August, 1904.

SIR EDWARD GREY: Papers will be laid as soon as possible.

Disturbances in North West Persia.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has any official information with regard to the recent disturbances in the North-West of Persia, whether the interests of any British subjects are affected, and, if so, what steps have been taken to safeguard them.

SIR EDWARD GREY: A state of general unrest prevails in the province of Azerbaijan, and especially on the northern portion of the Turco-Persian frontier, owing to the recent movement of Turkish troops. I am not aware that the interests of any British subjects are affected, though anything which threatens seriously the relations between Persia and Turkey must naturally continue to engage the attention of His Majetsy's Government.

The Foreign Secretary and Egypt.

MR. SWIFT-MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he had received a telegram from the committee of the National Party in Egypt complaining of the Foreign Secretary's statement that the Egyptians did not possess the qualities suited for self-government, and indicating that Egypt would continue to struggle for liberty and independence; and whether, having regard to the irritation caused by the erroneous statements in his speech, the right hon. Gentleman would make an explanation in order to smooth away the injurious effects of it.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I only received the hon. Member's Question as I entered the House. No such telegram has reached me as yet; but I would observe that very seldom one can please everybody in any speech delivered. If it should turn out that I have not succeeded in doing so I should not think that the fact would require explanation.

Betting and Old Age Pensions.

MR. BOTTOMLEY (Hackney, S.); I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, with a view to providing the funds for old-age pensions he will consider the desirableness of imposing a tax upon betting transactions and racing stakes, as is done in British Colonies and foreign countries.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.): The adoption of my hon. friends suggestion would appear to involve as a preliminary step the validation of betting transactions—a somewhat far-reaching proposal, which he will not expect me to discuss within the limits of a Parliamentary answer.

MR. J. WARD (Stoke-on-Trent): Does that apply to stakes? I think they ought all to be confiscated by the State.

[No Answer was returned.]

Playing Cards and Dice.

MR. BOTTOMLEY: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will state the amount estimated to be received during the current financial year in respect of the tax upon playing cards, and the licensing of dice manufacturers and the stamping of dice; and whether, having regard to the fact that playing cards and dice are used mainly for gambling purposes, he will consider the desirableness of repealing the tax and licensing duties upon them.

MR. ASQUITH: The duty derived from playing cards in 1906–7 amounted to £32,672. It will probably be about the same for 1907–8. The tax on dice was repealed in 1862. I do not think that the fact that playing cards may be—and no doubt in some cases are—used for gambling purposes constitutes a reason for exempting them from taxation.

MR. BOTTOMLEY: Is it not the fact that although the tax on dice has been repealed, a licence is still necessary for dice manufacturers, and does not the right hon. Gentleman think that the imposition of a tax on playing cards implies State regulation of gambling?

MR. ASQUITH: Not necessarily.

Financial Control.

MR. RIDSDALE (Brighton): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the great growth of local expenditure and of local indebtedness, he will consider the desirability of co-ordinating the control of local and national finance.

MR. ASQUITH: I am not sure that I understand precisely what my hon. friend means by "co-ordination of control," but the whole subject of the relations of local to national finance is engaging the careful consideration of His Majesty's Government.

Compulsory National Insurance.

MR. HERBERT: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been called to a scheme of compulsory national insurance propounded by the late Canon Blackley, the object of which is to compel every person, by payments made prior to attaining twenty-one years of age, to provide for himself sick pay and a pension for old age; and whether he will consider the advisability of inaugurating some such scheme, while applying his own scheme for old-age pensions to persons already above the age when payments under Canon Blackley's scheme would commence.

Mr. ASQUITH: The main provisions of Canon Blackley's scheme are familiar to me. I cannot at this stage make any announcement as to the proposals in regard to old-age pensions which the Government will lay before this House.

Imprisonment for Debt.

*Mr. BYLES (Salford, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, having regard to the Resolution unanimously passed by this House on 20th March last, on the Motion of the hon. Member for Bethnal Green, he is prepared with any proposal to check the growing judicial practice of committing debtors to prison.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.): The Government propose to refer the question of imprisonment for debt to a Select Committee.

*Mr. BYLES: Is there not a steady increase of committals year by year? Is it not time some action was taken on a unanimous Vote of the House of Commons passed a year ago?

Mr. GLADSTONE: The Vote was given on the undertaking that the Government would refer the Question to a Committee.

Labour Treaty with France.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he is able to communicate to the House information as to any labour treaty announced in France as recently concluded between His Majesty's Government and the French Republic.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Communications on the subject are passing, but I am not in a position to make any further statement at the present time. No treaty has so far been concluded.

Crime in Staffordshire—Irish Comparisons.

Mr. MOONEY (Newry): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he is aware that during the year 1905, there were reported to the police 3,822 indictable crimes in the county of Stafford, including one case of murder, three attempts to murder, four cases of conspiracy to murder, twenty-one cases of malicious wounding, three cases of unnatural offences, six cases of indecency with males, thirty-five cases of indecent assault on females, sixteen cases of larceny of horses and cattle, and cases of killing and maiming of cattle; if he can state when the figures for 1906 will be available; if he can state how many of these crimes were committed in the Kingswinford division of the county; and if he can now state whether there is any diminution of these classes of crime in this county or in the parishes comprising the Kingswinford division of the county.

Mr. GLADSTONE: The figures given by the hon. Member correspond closely to those in the Criminal Statistics for 1905, though there are one or two slight inaccuracies. The figures for 1906 will be available in two or three weeks time. I have no information as to how many of the crimes were committed in the Kingswinford division.

Mr. MOONEY asked whether the right hon. Gentleman could not obtain the information asked for from the ordinary police records of the county.

Mr. GLADSTONE replied that there were no separate criminal statistics available for different constituencies.

Mr. MOONEY asked the right hon. Gentleman to answer the last part of the Question on the Paper.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am quite aware that there are differences of administration in Ireland and England; but I am dealing with an English question, and my hon. friend must show that there is good reason for his request before I can put the officials to the trouble and expense of getting out the information he asks for.

MR. J. DEVLIN (Belfast, W.): Will the right hon. Gentleman arrange for a day for a debate on the state of crime in England?

*MR. STAVELEY-HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford) asked as to these figures which concerned the whole county, whether there was any difficulty in obtaining convictions.

MR. GLADSTONE: I am not aware that there has been difficulty in obtaining convictions.

MR. J. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether in a large number of these cases the juries refused to convict?

MR. GLADSTONE: I am quite aware of the motive for asking these Questions; but I do not think anything is to be gained by my attempting to reply.

*MR. STAVELEY-HILL: Can the right hon. Gentleman tell us how many convictions there were, having regard to the number of indictable offences?

MR. GLADSTONE: I have not the figures in my head, but I will get the figures if the hon. Member wishes for them.

MR. POWER (Waterford, E.): Can these people whose cattle have been killed or maimed obtain compensation from the rates?

MR. GLADSTONE: I must ask for notice of that Question.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether there is any county or any division of a county in Ireland where there has been anything like as much crime of a serious character as is indicated here?

MR. GLADSTONE: There is a great deal too much crime in England, but I cannot give any statistics offhand.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: You know the fact very well.

MR. COURTHOPE (Sussex, Rye): Can the right hon. Gentleman say how many of the persons concerned were of Irish extraction?

[No Answer was returned.]

Magisterial Administration.

MR. MYER (Lambeth, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that it is occasionally the practice for magistrates, especially during the hearing of appeal cases, to take part in the decision of cases without having heard the whole of the evidence; and whether he will issue instructions regulating the conduct of justices, thereby preventing such abuses in the future.

MR. GLADSTONE: I have no knowledge of any such practice. If my hon. friend will furnish me with the information on which his Question is based, I will consider whether I can take any action in the matter. I may point out, however, that I have no power "to issue instructions regulating the conduct of justices."

MR. MYER: I shall be glad to furnish the right hon. Gentleman with the information.

Vivisection—The Battersea Brown Dog

SIR PHILIP MAGNUS (London University): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the special expense of police protection of a public monument at Battersea that bears a controversial inscription; and whether he will consider the advisableness of introducing legislation with a view to prevent the erection in public places of monuments bearing inscriptions calculated to offend a large section of the people.

MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that Question, may I ask whether, before adopting the suggestion of the hon. Member, in view of the increase of crime and disorder in London and with a view to the better protection of His Majesty's subjects in the exercise of their lawful rights, he will consider the advisability of applying the Irish Crimes Act to this part of the country ?

MR. GLADSTONE : I think I will answer the Question on the Paper. Yes, Sir. The total amount of extra police duty which the protection of this monument has necessitated in the Borough of Battersea alone has been equivalent to the special services for one day of no less than 27 inspectors, 55 sergeants, and 1,083 constables. At present six constables are daily employed in this manner. In addition to this, large numbers of police have on several occasions had to be specially employed in other parts of London to cope with disturbances arising out of the same matter. This involves a considerable charge on the general body of London ratepayers, and the difficulty would grow acute if it were to become the fashion for parties or sections, for example on the tariff question, to put up public statues or memorials with a view to defaming the actions and views of opponents. If this became common, it would be necessary to make those who erect such statues responsible for the cost of their protection, but as things stand I do not think there is ground for introducing legislation.

MR. J. WARD : Could the Home Secretary give any information how it is that, in spite of all this disturbance and expense to the ratepayers, no single offender has been sent to prison ?

MR. GLADSTONE : That, perhaps, is the unfortunate part of the business. As the hon. Member knows, proceedings have been taken in the cases of individuals.

*SIR PHILIP MAGNUS : May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the Home Office is unable to take steps to prevent this heavy expenditure falling on the ratepayers, and whether he is aware that a large body of students of the London University is quite prepared to remove the offensive monument, if they are allowed to do so without interference by the police, without expense to the ratepayers ?

MR. GLADSTONE : I am afraid I have no suggestion to make, unless the borough of Battersea contributes to the expense of guarding the statue.

*MR. SMEATON (Stirlingshire) : Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the inscription on the statue is neither more nor less than an exact statement of the facts admitted, I understand, by Professor Starling and Mr. Bayliss ?

*MR. SPEAKER : Order, order ! The hon. Member is raising a very debatable question.

Payment of Jurors.

MR. HERBERT : I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the hardship inflicted upon jurors of the working classes when, in addition to the loss of wages, they are compelled to pay railway fares amounting to a substantial sum when such jurors reside at a distance from an assize town ; and whether, having regard to such hardship and to the public service upon which such jurors are engaged, he is prepared to make provision for the payment to jurors of travelling expenses not exceeding the parliamentary railway fare.

MR. GLADSTONE : My attention has been called to this matter, but I have no authority to make provision for the payment of jurymen's travelling expenses. Legislation would be required for that purpose, and I fear I can make no promises in regard to it.

Anti-Vaccination Declaration Fees.

MR. LLOYD MORGAN (Carmarthenshire, W.) : I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, when declarations are made by conscientious objectors under The Vaccination Act, 1907, before a justice of the peace without going to petty sessions, a fee of 1s. has to be paid by the person making the declaration ; and whether the justice of the peace before whom the declaration is made is obliged to demand the payment of the fee and pay it over to the county fund as a clerk's fee.

MR. GLADSTONE: A fee authorised by a Table of Justices' Clerks' Fees can be demanded only when a clerk has rendered the service in respect of which the fee is authorised. I am advised that when a declaration is made before a justice in the absence of the clerk, no fee should be demanded.

Penzance Conviction.

*MR. DUNN (Cornwall, Camborne): I beg to ask the Home Secretary if his attention has been called to the fact that two lads were on Monday at Penzance sent to prison for a month with hard labour for sleeping out, and, if the facts and crime be as stated will he order their immediate release.

MR. GLADSTONE said he was inquiring into the matter.

Railway Running Powers—Traders' Grievances.

MR. STRAUS (Tower Hamlets, Mile End): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will cause a complete list of the various running powers of the railways of the United Kingdom to be issued, so that traders may be able to send their goods by the shortest and cheapest route, instead of the route most in the interest of the receiving company, which is often the longest and most expensive.

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. KEARLEY, Devonport): I understand that the information as to the running powers possessed by railway companies desired by my hon. friend would, if published, be misleading, inasmuch as in many instances running powers, although possessed, are not exercised, and in many other cases they are only exercised partially or intermittently. If my hon. friend, however, will move for a Return, we will consider how far we can afford him useful information.

In reply to a further Question by Mr. STRAUS—

MR. KEARLEY said it was not compulsory on companies to use these powers.

MR. STRAUS: And therefore the public must suffer.

Railway Companies and Coal Freights.

MR. HEDGES (Kent, Tonbridge): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been drawn to the complaints from coal merchants, in consequence of the refusal of the railway companies to pay compensation for loss of coal in transit, and of their insistence on the payment of the freight charges on the gross weight of the consignment as declared by the colliery owners at the point of loading, irrespective of any loss in weight that may have occurred in transit; and whether, having regard to the fact that the allowance for shortage by the colliery owners is now almost entirely suspended he is prepared to take any action in the matter.

MR. KEARLEY: The question of the withdrawal by the railway companies of free carriage of a wastage allowance has been brought to the notice of the Department under the Railway and Canal Traffic Acts and is at the moment being considered, but so far as the matter is one between the colliery owner and the merchant the Board have no authority to intervene.

Aberdeen Coal Company.

MR. THORNE (West Ham, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he has received any information as to certain irregularities of the committee of the Aberdeen Coal Company, affecting the local harbour dues, dock and labour charges, and the Board of Trade coal tonnage Returns; and, if so, what steps are being taken in the matter; or, if not, whether inquiries will be made.

MR. KEARLEY: The Board of Trade have received no information on the subject, but if the hon. Member will furnish particulars as to the alleged irregularities, inquiries will be made.

Casual Labour in the Post Office.

MR. WEDGWOOD: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether postmasters outside London have to sign a document saying that they are unable to find men to act as casual postmen at Christmas at 4d. an hour, before they are entitled to allow them 6d. an hour; and, if so, will he consider the advisability of changing this practice.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I am not aware of any case in which a postmaster has been asked to sign a document of the kind. Perhaps the hon. Member will furnish me with the document in question, and I will then inquire into the matter.

Belfast Post Office.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether, as a result of the Committee which recently sat in regard to Post Office employees, the Belfast office is to be reduced in rank or raised to be a first-class office.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I hope shortly to be in a position to make an announcement respecting the various changes following upon the recommendations of the Parliamentary Committee, and in the meantime I am not able to state how particular offices will be affected.

Postage of Offensive Postcards.

MR. MYER: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to a case brought before Mr. Bros at the Lambeth Police Court, on 20th December last, in which it was stated that the defendant had been in the habit of addressing scurrilous postcards to the plaintiff, and to an action tried by Mr. Justice Darling, on 16th January, for libel by postcard; whether he has any official information showing that such cases of the abuse of the Post Office are frequent; whether the regulations of the Post Office forbid the delivery of offensive postcards; and, if so, whether he will take measures to see that the regulations are enforced, and to prosecute the offenders in all cases brought to his knowledge.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: The regulations of the Post Office forbid the delivery of grossly offensive postcards, and I have no reason to think that this rule is not generally enforced. The card in this case clearly ought not to have been delivered. I am making inquiry on the subject, and I will send the hon. Member a further reply.

Stratford Post Office Messengers.

MR. THORNE: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General how many messenger boys were on duty at the Stratford Post Office on 2nd February, the number of hours they were on duty, and the amount of pay they received for their services on that date.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: Seventeen telegraph messengers were employed at Stratford Branch Office on Sunday, 2nd February; ten were on duty from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., and seven were on duty from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. Telegraph messengers in London are not paid specially for the Sunday attendance which they are required to give, as a rule, every third Sunday, but are allowed "time off" in the week in place of it. I may add that the whole question of the attendance of telegraph messengers in London is occupying my attention.

Boy Clerks in the Post Office.

MR. RAWLINSON (Cambridge University): On behalf of the hon. Member for the Hoxton Division, I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he will consider the advisability of creating limited competitions for boy clerks in examinations for situations as sorter, telegraphist, and other Post Office appointments, in view of the fact that large numbers of boy clerks, now employed in the Post Office, have to be discharged at the age of twenty, although the training they have received in the methods of the Department would prove of incalculable value.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I am in sympathy with the desire of the hon. Member to create opportunities for boy clerks to secure established appointments; and I have already arranged that every boy clerk employed in the Post Office whose service is satisfactory, shall have the opportunity of competing for a permanent situation. The posts of registry assistant in London are reserved exclusively for boy clerks; a fixed proportion of certain clerical posts in the Engineering Department is also reserved for them; and those who are not admitted to competitions for these clerical posts are allowed to take part in the limited competitions for the situations of learner and sorting clerk and telegraphist in the provinces. To extend further the opportunities to boy clerks for entering limited competitions for non-clerical posts would seriously interfere with the prospects of the telegraph messengers, and to this I regret that I cannot consent.

East Hardwick School, Yorkshire.

MR. CARLILE (Hertfordshire, St. Albans): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education if he will state the reasons why the Board of Education refused to receive a deputation of managers and persons interested in East Hardwick School, situate in the West Riding of Yorkshire.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): The circumstances of this case did not appear to necessitate the attendance of a deputation, but persons representing the managers of the school have had interviews with the Board of Education on two occasions within the last six months.

Pontfadog School.

MR BRIDGEMAN (Shropshire, Oswestry): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether it is proposed to grant £1,250 to build a new school at Pontfadog, Denbighshire, without requiring any contribution from the rates, and in spite of the petition of sixty-two ratepayers against it.

MR. MCKENNA: In the event of the conditions for the payment of a grant being satisfied in this case the grant made would certainly not cover the whole cost of the school and some contribution from local sources would, therefore, be necessary.

School Plans.

MR. BRIDGEMAN: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether the plans for building new schools with the assistance of the grant provided in the Appropriation Act, 1907, have been approved by the Board of Education before the preliminary inquiries have been completed.

MR. MCKENNA: Plans for building new schools are submitted, considered, and approved in the ordinary course of office administration quite independently of the question of a building grant. The Board's approval of the plans does not in any way commit them to making a grant in aid of the cost of executing them.

Denbighshire and Flint Schools.

MR. BRIDGEMAN: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether it is proposed to make a grant out of the fund provided in the Appropriation Act of 1907 for schools at Gwersyllt, Denbighshire, and at Flint to make good a numerical deficiency of public elementary accommodation.

MR. MCKENNA: No grants will be made to make good a numerical deficiency of public elementary school accommodation.

MR. BRIDGEMAN: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education, whether inquiries have been held with regard to the applications for grants out of the fund provided by the Appropriation Act, 1907, to build new schools at Penycae, Minera, Llantysilio, Llanfihangel Glyn Myfyr, Pontfadoc, and Bylchan, in the county of Denbigh, and at Gwaenysgor, in Flintshire; and if the ratepayers or parents who objected to the proposal were heard.

MR. MCKENNA: No, Sir. All appeals against the provision of new public elementary schools are carefully considered by the Board, who are empowered, if they think fit, to hold a public inquiry to assist them in arriving at a decision. It is not, however, and never has been the practice of the Board to hold an inquiry in every case irrespective of whether the particular circumstances appear to require it.

MR. BRIDGEMAN: Have there been any inquiries in this particular case?

MR. MCKENNA: I cannot say, but if inquiries appear to the Board to be necessary they will be held.

MR. BOWLES: As a matter of fact has an inquiry been held in any case of an application for a grant?

MR. McKENNA: I am under the impression that there have been several.

School Building Grants.

MR. BRIDGEMAN: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education, whether it is proposed to make any grants for building schools out of the sum provided in the Appropriation Act of 1907, in contravention of Section 18 (1) (*c*) of the Education Act, 1902.

MR. McKENNA: It is proposed to make grants for building schools, but the Board will take care that the section, which the hon. Member quotes, is not contravened.

Penycae School.

MR. BRIDGEMAN: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education, whether those who petitioned for a grant out of the fund provided in the Appropriation Act, 1907, for a new school at Penycae, in Denbighshire, were informed that no charge would be made upon the rates; and, if so, whether that information was given with the knowledge of the local education authority or of the Board of Education.

MR. McKENNA: The Board have no knowledge of what information was given, whether by the local education authority or by any other persons.

Swine Fever.

MR. LAURENCE HARDY (Kent, Ashford): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he is able to state what action the Board intends to take with respect to the unsatisfactory Returns in connection with swine fever; and whether he will now appoint a Departmental Committee to consider the question, and especially the policy adopted by the Board during the last few years.

THE TREASURER OF THE HOUSEHOLD (Sir E. STRACHEY, Somerset, S.): The question of swine fever has been engaging the earnest attention of my noble friend and the officers concerned for some time past, and as a result of further experimental investigations which have been conducted by the veterinary officers of the Board it has been decided to issue new Orders on the subject which will it is believed enable the operations against the disease to be conducted in a manner fully calculated to ensure their eventual success, whilst at the same time modifying to a considerable extent the restrictions imposed on the movement of swine for breeding purposes and for slaughter which have been found to cause hardship. It is also proposed to use our powers of slaughter more freely so as to enable premises to be freed from restrictions at an earlier date than would otherwise be the case. The suggestion that a Departmental Committee should be appointed will be kept in mind, but any inquiry of the kind would occupy some months, and my noble friend is anxious to bring the new Orders into force with as little delay as possible. Their results will, of course, be carefully watched.

Potato Disease.

MR. LAURENCE HARDY: I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether, in view of the fact that a new destructive disease affecting potatoes, known as black scab, has been lately introduced into England, and is known to have occurred in nine counties in Scotland, the Board of Agriculture are taking any steps under the powers conferred on them by the Destructive Insects and Pest Act, 1907, to limit the spread of the disease; and whether the Board will at once take steps to keep the infected areas under the supervision of a competent inspector, in order to prevent the disease being spread through the sale of such potatoes from these areas.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: A leaflet descriptive of the disease to which the hon. Member refers and of the measures to be taken with respect to it has been printed both in English and Welsh and widely circulated. The possibility of dealing with the disease under the Act of last Session is under consideration. The enforcement of any Order which may be issued will rest with the local authorities.

Mr. LAURENCE HARDY: Will the Board take care to exercise supervision?

Sir EDWARD STRACHEY replied in the affirmative.

The Outbreak of Cattle Disease in Midlothian.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield): I beg to ask the Member for South Somerset, as representing the Board of Agriculture, what steps are being taken as to the outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in Midlothian; if he has any further information on the subject to give to the House; and why a similar statement to that made in the House of Lords yesterday was not made in this House.

Sir EDWARD STRACHEY: The premises at Gorgie, Midlothian, on which foot-and-mouth disease occurred, were at once declared an infected place, and thereupon the provisions of the Foot and Mouth Disease Order of 1895, which prescribe the steps to be taken to prevent the spread of the disease, were brought automatically into operation. I shall be glad to supply a copy of the Order to my hon. friend. The premises are of course being carefully watched by the police. Orders were also issued yesterday prohibiting absolutely the movement of animals in the district surrounding Edinburgh to the south of the Firth of Forth pending full inquiry. Our chief veterinary officer considers that the existence of the disease must be regarded as established, and in view of the importance of the matter he went to Edinburgh last night and will advise as to further procedure. A staff of inspectors has been dispatched to Edinburgh and is engaged in tracing any other possible centres in which disease exists or to which it may have been conveyed. The information given by my noble friend yesterday did not reach me until after Questions in this House had been completed. I may add that I have just received intimation that a Report has been received from Mr. Douglas to the effect that there are on the infected premises 110 cows and one calf. Five fat cows have recently been removed from the premises, and have presumably been slaughtered. Inquiries are being made as to that. Three cows have recently been moved on to the premises, but they do not appear to have been the original cause of the outbreak. It has been ascertained that manure from the dairy has recently been sent to two different sets of farm premises in Midlothian, and inquiries are being made as to the manner in which it has been disposed of. The premises are being carefully watched by the police, and everything possible is being done to prevent the spread of the infection.

*Mr. CHAPLIN (Surrey, Wimbledon): Can the right hon. Gentleman give to the House any information as to the cause or supposed cause of this outbreak?

Sir EDWARD STRACHEY: The cause is being most carefully inquired into, but at present I am unable to make any statement. I may be able to do so later.

Temporary Clerks.

Mr. RAWLINSON (Cambridge University): On behalf of the hon. Member for the Hoxton Division of Shoreditch, I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that a small body of men designated temporary clerks, who have been employed in certain departments of His Majesty's Civil Service for a period of fifteen or twenty years, have been given notice to retire; and whether, in view of the fact that these men will not receive pensions, and that their salaries have not been subject to any increment, he will state the amount of bonus which will be awarded to them for their long services.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Runciman, Dewsbury): I have nothing to add to the Answer which I gave the hon. Member to this Question on the 20th August last.

Place of Origin Marks.

Mr. RAWLINSON: On behalf of the hon. Member for the Hoxton Division, I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether consignments of empty cardboard boxes bearing English wording, and not marked in accordance with the Merchandise Marks Act, 1887, are being regularly imported into this country; and, if so, what action he proposes to take in the matter.

MR. RUNCIMAN: I beg to refer the hon. Member to my Answer to a similar Question by him on 15th July last, to which I have nothing to add except that the Board of Customs are not aware that since that date there have been any importations of empty cardboard boxes bearing English wording and not marked in accordance with the Merchandise Marks Act, 1887.

Grants in Aid to British East Africa.

MR. WEDGWOOD: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, in view of the fact that we are now paying an annual grant-in-aid of £164,000 to British East Africa, and that the revenue of British East Africa has steadily increased from £108,857 in 1903–1904 to £395,828 in 1906–1907, and in view of this progress towards financial equilibrium, he will undertake that in future no more money shall be given to this Colony in the form of a grant-in-aid, but only by way of loan.

MR. RUNCIMAN: The revenue of the British East Africa Protectorate for 1906–1907 was £461,363, but this figure, which represents the gross revenue, including the receipts of the Uganda Railway, is not properly comparable with the figure given in the accounts for 1903–1904, viz., £108,857, which represents net revenue only. On reviewing the financial situation of the Protectorate as shown by the complete accounts for the last six years, and having regard to the probable out-turn of the current year, I do not feel justified in giving the undertaking suggested.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston): Can the hon. Gentleman give any indication of how long we are to go on subsidising this Colony?

MR. RUNCIMAN: It is impossible for me to prophesy what will be the receipts of the Uganda Railway or the total revenue of the Colony.

MR. WEDGWOOD asked whether there was any objection to taking this reasonable precaution as to the recovery of the money by the British taxpayer in case the Colony did become self-supporting.

MR. RUNCIMAN: When the Colony does become self-supporting we can then consider the question.

The Killing and Landing of Whales.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if, in view of the impossibility of enforcing Sub-section 6 of Clause 3 of The Whale Fisheries (Scotland) Act, 1907, providing that whales shall not be killed within a distance of forty miles from the coast, he will take power to prohibit the landing of whales during such period as the Fishery Board may from time to time prescribe.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): Any person holding a licence to shoot and land whales, who contravenes the subsection referred to, apart from the penalty incurred runs the serious risk of losing his licence under Subsection 8, Section 2 of the Act. I have no reason to suppose that this consideration will not have due weight with licence-holders.

Shetland Fishing Industry.

MR. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he is aware of the fact that the prosperity of the Shetland Isles is absolutely bound up with the herring and white fishing, and that this all-important industry is seriously menaced by whaling operations and the depredations of trawlers; and if it will be possible to maintain a fishery cruiser permanently in northern waters.

MR. SINCLAIR: The Shetland fishing has recently been very successful, but, in any case, the resources at the command of the Fishery Board and their obligations to the remainder of Scotland do not permit of the allocation of a vessel exclusively to Shetland. But these islands will continue to receive a liberal share of such policing resources as the Board at present command.

Registration of Title.

MR. ROWLANDS (Kent, Dartford): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Scotland whether the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the expediency of instituting a system of registration of title has finished its inquiry; and, if so, whether he can say when the Report is likely to be issued.

MR. SINCLAIR: It is not yet possible, so I am informed, to name a date.

Island of Barra.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS (Kent, St. Augustine's): On behalf of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of London, I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will lay upon the Table of the House any correspondence that passed during the last twelve months between himself and Lady Gordon Cathcart, and between the Lord Advocate and Lady Gordon Cathcart, in connection with recent transactions in the Island of Barra.

MR. SINCLAIR: Yes, Sir.

Inistioge Fishery.

MR. N. MURPHY (Kilkenny, S.): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculutre (Ireland) whether he is aware that a net has been placed across the River Nore at Inistioge by Colonel Tighe, obstructing the passage of fish to the disadvantage of fishermen plying their trade on other parts of the river; and whether, seeing that several complaints have been made in connection with this net, steps will be taken to have it removed, or otherwise so used as not to injure the fishermen referred to.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): The only illegality indicated in the question is the stretching of the net entirely across the river. The Department have been informed that the net is not so used. The local Board of Conservators and the Constabulary were last year instructed to keep the manner of its use under observation with a view to the detection of any illegality in connection with it. If any person is prepared to prove before magistrates at Petty Sessions that this net during its use has been stretched entirely across the river or used in any illegal manner the Department will request the Conservators to see that proceedings are instituted.

MR. N. MURPHY: Arising out of the Answer, might I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he is aware that watchmen are employed on both sides of the river on elevated platforms, erected by Colonel Tighe, for the purpose of signalling to those in charge of the net whenever those watchers can discern a fish approaching towards it.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I am not aware of it, but I will see what can be done.

MR. JOYCE (Kilkenny): Will the Vice-President inquire if the law which requires a proper king's gap to be reserved is observed.

MR. RUSSELL: The complaint in this case is that the king's gap is not sufficient.

Cost of Extra Police in Ireland.

MR. GEORGE CLARK (Belfast, N.): On behalf of the hon. Member for East Down, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what extra cost of the police availed of under the proclamation in the terms of the Act of William IV. made by the Irish Government in August last has been in the counties of Meath, Longford, Westmeath, Leitrim, Roscommon, and Galway; by whom such costs will be borne; and in what proportions.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): In respect of the half year ended 30th September last, claims have been made against six county councils for the services of additional police appointed in pursuance of proclamations under the Act 6, William IV. The amounts claimed are: Clare, £161 2s. 6d.; Galway, £287 11s. 4d.; King's County, £50 9s. 10d.; Leitrim, £53 9s. 1d.; Longford, £59 7s. 8d.; and Roscommon, £278 7s. 10d. These sums represent half the cost of the police and are chargeable in each case upon the county at large. The other half of the cost is borne on the Constabulary Vote. The counties of Meath and Westmeath have not been proclaimed. In addition to these charges, claims amounting in all to £3,655 4s. 8d. have been made against the counties named, including Meath and Westmeath, for the services of extra police between 1st April and 31st August, 1907, the date on which men were appointed under the proclamation. The amounts to be claimed for the current half year cannot be ascertained until 1st April.

MR. J. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): Will the right hon. Gentleman state the cost for extra police in Belfast at the same time?

MR. BIRRELL: I will inquire.

MR. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): Does the same system obtain in England in regard to extra police?

MR. BIRRELL: I think not.

Irish Compensation for Injury, Clare.

MR. GEORGE CLARK: On behalf of the hon. Member for East Down, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland the amount of compensation claimed and allowed for in the cases of malicious injury, burnings, cattle maiming, etc., in the counties of Meath, Longford, and King's County during the past thirteen months.

MR. BIRRELL: In county Meath, eighteen claims, amounting to £1,046, were lodged. In eight of these, awards to the amount of £252 have been made, and the remaining ten claims amounting to £544 are pending. In county Longford, four claims, amounting to £46, were made, and all were rejected. In King's County, eighteen claims amounting to £2,710, were lodged. Two were rejected, and in the remaining sixteen cases compensation to the amount of £1,907 was given. The compensation granted in one case alone was £1,750.

Judge Bodkin.

MR. JOHN ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will say what steps the Government propose to take to ascertain the circumstances under which the recent proceedings for a writ *quo warranto* in the case of His Honour County Court Judge Bodkin were initiated; and whether he proposes to take any action in view of the suggestion of the Lord Chief Justice of Ireland that proceedings by way of petition might be taken.

MR. BIRRELL: The Government do not propose to take any steps in this matter. It is of course open to Judge Bodkin to take action if so advised.

Grocers' Licences in Belfast.

MR. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state the number of prosecutions of holders of spirit grocers' licences in Belfast during the year ending 31st January, 1908, for selling for consumption on the premises, and the number of such cases in which it was successfully claimed that the liquor was given as a treat; and is he aware that certain magistrates are canvassed and make a practice of attending on court days when licensing prosecutions are heard who seldom or never adjudicate on other cases of prosecution.

MR. BIRRELL: During the year ending 31st January, 1908, sixty-four prosecutions of the nature referred to were instituted in Belfast, and in twenty-one of these cases the defendant succesfully contended that the liquor was given as a treat. The police have no information to the effect stated in the concluding part of the Question.

Belfast Disturbances—Claims for Compensation.

MR. J. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the total amount claimed as compensation for malicious injuries in the city of Belfast during the last twelve months.

MR. BIRRELL: The total amount claimed as compensation for malicious injuries in Belfast during the twelve months ending 31st January, 1908, was £31,999. The amount awarded was £965. Many of the claims were dropped.

MR. GEORGE CLARK: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that most of the damage was done by an organised Nationalist mob?

MR. BIRRELL: No, Sir.

MR. J. DEVLIN (Belfast, W.) Is it not the fact that most of the mischief was caused by the inflammatory speeches of the hon. Gentleman?

MR. BIRRELL: I should doubt whether such terrible consequences followed.

MR. MOORE (Armagh, N.) asked the Chief Secretary why, in face of the amount of these claims, the Government had decided not to proceed further with the prosecution of the originator, Mr. Larkin?

MR. BIRRELL said he was more struck with the disparity between the amount of the claims and the amount awarded.

MR. J. MACVEAGH: Are we to understand that the loyalists of Belfast endeavoured to defraud the ratepayers out of £30,000 by means of bogus claims?

[No Answer was returned.]

Lighting of Vehicles Act.

MR. N. MURPHY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what steps, if any, have been taken to notify the public of the existence since 1st January of the present year, to the Lighting of Vehicles Act.

MR. BIRRELL: It is not customary to make any official notification to the public when Acts of Parliament come into operation. The Lighting of Vehicles Act has doubtless been brought to public notice in Ireland through the medium of the Press. It may, I think, be assumed that the magistrates before whom the first prosecutions are brought will take full account of the fact that the Act is of recent date.

MR N. MURPHY: Has the usual practice been followed of issuing a proclamation as to the Act?

MR. BIRRELL: I will inquire.

The Boxwell Evicted Tenants.

MR. FFRENCH (Wexford, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if any progress has yet been made with regard to the restoration of the Boxwell evicted tenants; if the Estates Commissioners have offered a price to Mr. Boxwell, the landlord, and if the latter has accepted it; and whether he can say if there is any possibility of the restoration taking place in time to allow the tenants to put in their crops in the coming spring.

MR. BIRRELL: The matter of the Boxwell estates has been referred to an inspector, who has also been directed to inquire into the applications received from former tenants. The inspector's Report has not yet been received, but the Estates Commissioners have now directed him to expedite his inquiries in the case.

Thomastown Labourers' Act Inquiry.

MR. N. MURPHY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Major Bredin, inspector under the Labourers Acts, gave evidence on behalf of several landowners at the arbitration inquiry recently held at Thomastown, county Kilkenny; and whether the appearance of this witness on such an occasion was in accordance with the terms of his appointment.

MR. BIRRELL: The Local Government Board have ascertained from Major Bredin that on one occasion he acted as valuer in an arbitration inquiry at a time when he was not engaged on the business of the Board. Major Bredin, who is a court valuer, has been employed by the Board to hold occasional inquiries under the Labourers Acts, and there is nothing in the terms of his employment as occasional inspector to prevent him from carrying on his ordinary occupation when not employed by the Board.

Viewmount Grass Letting.

MR. MEAGHER (Kilkenny, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that forces of police were sent from Paulstown, Gowran, and Goresbridge to assist at a grass-letting at

Viewmount, County Kilkenny, on 22nd January; will he state by whose authority such action was taken; was a breach of the peace apprehended; if so, on what grounds; and, seeing that Kilkenny is one of the most peaceable and law-abiding counties in the United Kingdom, and with a view to prevent a breach of the peace and feelings of bitterness between the authorities and the people, will he see that conduct such as this will not be allowed in future.

MR. BIRRELL: A letting by auction of grazing lands at Viewmount was announced for 22nd January. The police authorities had reason to apprehend that the auction might be interfered with, and consequently four policemen were sent to the place for the preservation of the peace. It is the fact that the county of Kilkenny generally is in a most peaceful condition, but in this particular instance precautionary measures were called for.

In reply to a further Question the right hon. Gentleman said the police would not have been sent to the auction had not threatening notices been posted.

Cattle Driving Prosecutions.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what has been the expenditure up to 31st January from the Vote for Law Charges and Criminal Prosecutions, Ireland, under the sub-heads of the Votes—Fees to Law Officers, Fees to counsel, and Fees to prosecutors, traversers, witnesses, etc., respectively; and whether a supplementary Estimate will be presented.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg also to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the amounts paid during the current financial year in fees to Law Officers and counsel, expenses of witnesses, and other costs in connection with the proceedings taken against persons charged with offences connected with cattle-driving.

MR. BIRRELL: The expenditure from the Vote for Law Charges and Criminal Prosecutions, Ireland, for the month of January has not yet been ascertained. I will, however, state the amounts voted for the year under each of the sub-heads indicated, and the amounts expended during the nine months ending 31st December: Prosecutors, etc. (that is, Prosecutors' and Witnesses' Expenses): Amount, voted, £13,000; expended, £7,481. Fees to law officers: Voted, £1,000; expended, £1,907. Fees to counsel: Voted £7,000: expended £5,740; general law expenses (including extra expenses of traversers and their witnesses): Voted, £4,885; expended, £2,447. A supplementary estimate for £2,352 will be presented. The details asked for by the hon. Member for Mid-Armagh as to the expenditure in connection with prosecutions for cattle-driving, could not be ascertained without reference to the Crown Solicitors of the counties concerned, and this would necessarily take some time.

Afforestation in Ireland.

MR. HAYDEN asked when the Report of the Committee on Afforestation in Ireland would be presented to the House.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I believe the Chairman is now engaged in preparing it.

Irish School Managers Liabilities.

MR. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, in view of the fact that managers of national schools in Ireland are held liable under the Employers' Liability Act of 1906, and seeing that the Commissioners have the right to recognise them as managers and to withdraw such recognition, and that the Commissioners themselves have the right to admonish, reprimand, fine, and dismiss the teachers, together with the fact that the salaries paid by the Commissioners are derived from public funds, he will endeavour to provide a remedy to relieve managers from any liability under the above Act.

MR. RUNCIMAN: The Treasury cannot assume any liability for injuries sustained by national school teachers, since they are appointed by, and under the control of, the local managers and are not in the employment of the State.

MR. SLOAN: Is there no remedy?

Mr. RUNCIMAN: It lies with the managers themselves.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS (Kent, St. Augustine's) asked as to the business for next week.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs) said that on Monday the first business would be the introduction and First Reading of the Children's Bill under the ten minutes rule. The second order would be the Supplementary Army Estimates, and the third order the Supplementary Civil Service Estimates. These would be continued on Tuesday. There would be no Supplementary Navy Estimates; and the other Estimates would be circulated to-morrow morning.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: Will Thursday be a Supply day?

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not think that it is likely.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: The right hon. Gentleman will probably see what is in our minds, for there is an idea that the Licensing Bill will be introduced on Thursday, and we wanted to be prepared for it.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not think that the Licensing Bill will be introduced on Thursday.

NEW MEMBERS SWORN.

Walter MacMurrough Kavanagh, esquire, for County of Carlow.

Thomas Charles Reginald Agar-Robartes, esquire, commonly called the hon. Thomas Charles Reginald Agar-Robartes, County of Cornwall (Mid or St. Austell Division).

SELECTION.

Mr. William Abraham (Cork), Mr. Crombie, Mr. Dalziel, Mr. Fenwick, Sir Henry Aubrey-Fletcher, Sir William Brampton Gurdon, Sir Joseph Leese, Colonel Lockwood, Mr. George Roberts, Mr. Herbert Roberts, and Mr. William Frederick Smith were nominated Members of the Committee of Selection.—(*Sir William Brampton Gurdon.*)

NEW BILLS.

LARCENY BILL.

"To amend the Larceny Act, 1861," presented by Mr. Courthope; supported by Sir John Dickson-Poynder, Mr. Courtenay Warner, Mr. James Mason, Mr. Leif Jones, Mr. Hicks Beach, Mr. Lane-Fox, Mr. Everett, Mr. Acland, Mr. Brace, Mr. Nicholls, and Mr. Laurence Hardy; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 52.]

ECCLESIASTICAL ASSESSMENTS (SCOTLAND) (NO. 2) BILL.

"To exempt all feuars from Ecclesiastical Assessments in Scotland," presented by Mr. Smeaton; supported by Mr. Dundas White and Captain Pirie; to be read a second time upon Monday, 6th April, and to be printed. [Bill 53.]

CROFTERS' HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Acts relating to Crofters' Holdings in Scotland," presented by Sir Edward Tennant; supported by Mr. Munro Ferguson; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 27th February, and to be printed. [Bill 54.]

DOGS' PROTECTION BILL.

"To prohibit experiments upon Dogs," presented by Sir Frederick Banbury; supported by Sir Francis Channing, Mr. Ellis Griffith, and Mr. MacNeill; to be read a second time To-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 55.]

WHALE FISHERIES (SCOTLAND) ACT (1907) AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Whale Fisheries (Scotland) Act, 1907, and to provide more effective means of regulating the Whale Fisheries of the Shetland Isles during the time of the summer herring fishing," presented by Mr. Cathcart Wason, supported by Major Anstruther-Gray and Mr. Morton; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 18th February, and to be printed. [Bill 56.]

HIGHWAYS BILL.

"To amend the Highways Act, 1835," presented by Mr. Gill; supported by Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Kelley, Mr. Clynes, Mr. Parker, and Mr. Tyson Wilson; to be read a second time upon Friday, 3rd April, and to be printed. [Bill 57.]

SMALL LANDHOLDERS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To encourage the formation of Small Agricultural Holdings in Scotland, and to amend the Law relating to the tenure of such holdings (including crofters holdings); and for other purposes connected therewith," presented by Mr. Sinclair; supported by the Lord Advocate; to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 58.]

LAND VALUES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To provide for the ascertainment of Land Values in Scotland," presented by the Lord Advocate; supported by Mr. Sinclair and Mr. Solicitor-General for Scotland; to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 59.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (KING'S SPEECH) MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the proceedings on the King's Speech (Motion for an Address), if under discussion at Eleven o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order (Sittings of the House)."—(*Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.*)

The House divided:—Ayes, 328; Noes, 78. (Division List No. 5.)

AYES.

Acland, Francis Dyke
Agar-Robartes, Hon. T. C. R.
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Alden, Percy
Allen, A.Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Ambrose, Robert
Asquith,Rt.Hon.HerbertHenry
Baker,Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.)
Baring,Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Sir John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beck, A. Cecil
Bellairs, Carlyon
Belloc, Hilaire Joseph Peter R.
Benn,SirJ.Williams (Devonp'rt
Benn,W. (T'w'rHamlets,S.Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bethell,Sir J.H.(Essex,Romf'rd
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W.
Boland, John
Bottomley, Horatio
Boulton, A. C. F.
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brodie, H. C.
Brunner,J.F.L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton,Rt.Hn.Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton,RtHn.Richard Knight
Channing, Sir Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Churchill, Rt. Hon. Winston S.
Clancy, John Joseph
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Clynes, J. R.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins,SirWm.J. (S.Pancras,W
Compton-Rickett, Sir J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett,CH (Sussex,E.Grinst'd
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Crossley, William J.
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan- (Cardigan
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dewar,Sir J.A.(Inverness-sh.)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Dobson, Thomas W.
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne,Major E.Martin(Walsall
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Sir Francis (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Esslemont, George Birnie
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Freeman-Thomas, Freeman
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.Herbert John
Glen-Coats,Sir T.(Renfrew, W.
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Grayson, Albert Victor
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon,RtHn. SirW.Brampton
Gwynn, Stephen Lucius
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hamsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harvey,W.E. (Derbyshire,N.E.
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazleton, Richard
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hodge, John
Hogan, Michael
Holland, Sir William Henry

Holt, Richard Durning
Hove, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hope,W.Bateman (Somerset,N
Horniman, Emslie John
Hudson, Walter
Hyde, Clarendon
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Jardine, Sir J.
Jenkins, J.
Jones,Sir D.Brynmor(Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kavanagh, Walter M.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh A. (Donegal, W.)
Leese,Sir JosephF.(Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex,Harwich
Lever,W.H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald,J.M. (Falkirk B'ghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh,Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh,Charles(Donegal, E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Rt. Hon. Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mallet, Charles E.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Marks,G. Croydon(Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Mond, A.
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. G.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morrell, Philip
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John (Kerry, East)
Murphy, N. J. (Kilkenny, S.)
Myer, Horatio
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, Sir George (Swansea)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson,Charles N.(Doncast'r
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien,Kendal(Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor,James (Wicklow,W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly,James (Roscommon,N
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pearson, W.H.M. (Suffolk,Eye)
Perks, Robert William
Philipps,J.Wynford (Pembroke
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Phillips, John (Longford, S.)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Pollard, Dr.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Priestley, W.E.B. (Bradford,E.
Pullar, Sir Robert
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Richards, T.F. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E(Dundee)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robinson, S.
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann,Sir C.E.(Manchester)
Scott,A.H.(Ashton-under-Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seely, Colonel
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smyth, Thomas F. (Leitrim, S.)
Snowden, P.
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn.A. Lyulph(Chesh.)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Summerbell, T.
Tennant, Sir Edward(Salisbury
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen,E.)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan,E.)
Thomasson, Franklin
Thorne, William
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Verney, F. W.
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walsh, Stephen
Walton, Joseph
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent
Wardle, George J.
Waring, Walter
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason,Rt.Hn.E.(Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart(Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, Henry A.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Whitbread, Howard
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Wiles, Thomas
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams,Llewelyn(Carmarth'n
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williamson, A.
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, J.W. (Worcestersh, N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wood, T. M'Kinnon

Tellers for the Ayes—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Balcarres, Lord
Banbury, Sir FrederickGeorge
Beach,Hn.Michael Hugh Hicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bowles, G. Stewart
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Bull, Sir William James

Butcher, Samuel Henry
Carlile, E. Hildred
Cavendish, Rt. Hn. Victor C. W.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A. (Worc.
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Clark, George Smith (Belfast, N.
Clive, Percy Archer
Coates, E. Feetham (Lewisham)
Collings, Rt. Hn. J. (Birmingh'm
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Chas. Curtis (Antrim, S.)
Craik, Sir Henry
Cross, Alexander
Dalrymple, Viscount
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Fetherstonhaugh, Godfrey
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gordon, J.
Guinness, Walter Edward
Haddock, George B.
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford
Harris, Frederick Leverton)
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Heaton, John Henniker
Hill, Lord Arthur (West Down)
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W
Kimber, Sir Henry
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar (Dulwich)
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants, Fareham
Lockwood, Rt Hn. Lt.-Col. A. R
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Dublin, S)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Magnus, Sir Philip
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Moore, William
Morrison-Bell, Captain
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Nicholson, Wm. G. (Petersfield
Parker, Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Percy, Earl
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Randles, Sir John Scurrah
Rawlinson, John Frederick Peel
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East
Starkey, John R.
Staveley-Hill, Henry (Staff'sh
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ
Thornton, Percy M.
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES.—Viscount Valentia and Mr. Forster.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [29th January], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth—

Most Gracious Sovereign,

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Lehmann.*)

Question again proposed.

SIR WILLIAM HOLLAND (Yorkshire, W.R., Rotherham) continued his speech, interrupted at Eleven o'clock yesterday, in support of the following Amendment:—"But we humbly beg to represent to your Majesty that in the interests of the trade and commerce of the United Kingdom it is highly important that the *status* of the Board of Trade should be raised, and that it should be placed on a par with the office of a Secretary of State." The hon. Member said: When business was interrupted last night, I confess I rather envied the proposer of a Bill which, I believe, is to be introduced probably during this session of Parliament, viz., a Bill to provide for giving us a little more daylight; because I understand under the provisions of the Bill clocks may be stopped ocasionally for a few minutes, and such a provision would have been very useful to me last night and would have prevented my intrusion on the House to-day. But the few remarks that I had intended to make on this occasion I have decided to abandon in order to have the great advantage of having my Amendment supported from the front Opposition bench, as it will be in a moment, and the very competent support that I am to receive from that quarter would be impossible if I were to make a speech, because the hon. Member who is going to support me has to leave the House in a few minutes. But I feel that the pledge that I gave necessitates my referring to the hon. Member for Derby who some months ago, as the House will recollect, played such a conspicuous and noble part in the settlement of the railway dispute by the competent and efficient way in which he represented the railway workers. The hon. Member for Derby told me that he was exceedingly anxious to have an opportunity of supporting my Amendment, and that the experience which he had had on that occasion would have enabled him to speak with greater authority than anybody can of the efficient services in the cause of industrial peace rendered by the Board of

Trade. But, unfortunately, in consequence of certain railway matters that hon. Gentleman cannot be in his place to-day, and I have to fulfil the pledge I gave him that I would at least mention the fact that he was cordially in favour of my Amendment. I will not trouble the House any further, but I beg to move.

MR. BONAR LAW (Camberwell Dulwich): I rise to second this Amendment, and my reason for doing so is that I happened to be a member of the Board of Trade when the last Government was in power. There is one consideration which I think the House ought to keep in view in dealing with a matter of this kind. It is a well-known fact that when a Member of the House becomes connected with a Department, he becomes a partisan of that Department. That applies to all alike, and therefore a certain amount of discount will perhaps attach to my advocacy of the present proposal. Perhaps the best way to judge of the proposal is to look at the objections urged to it as indicated by the Amendments now on the Paper. My right hon. friend the Member for Wimbledon proposes that the change should apply equally to the Local Government Board. It was inevitable that he should make the Amendment, because it was the policy of the Government of which I was a member. We were in favour of raising the *status* of both, but I am certain that my hon. friend does not mean by that, that if the Government will not do both he will not support the Motion for raising the *status* of the one, and assume a dog-in-the-manger attitude towards the Board of Trade. It is not necessary to point out distinctions in the position of that Department, but it might be done without minimising the importance of others. In many ways the vital interests of the country are affected by the way in which the business of the Board of Trade is conducted. That Department deals not only with trade in the United Kingdom, but under the principle established by the late Government, with branches all over the Empire, and I would remind the House that it was found expedient, when Mr. Gerald Balfour was at the Department and was arranging the Commercial Treaty with Roumania, to send the head of the Commercial Department to assist in the matter, on the ground that he was better able to do so than anybody else, because, owing to ramifications of the Board of Trade, he knew more about it. The next Amendment is that of the hon. Member for Glasgow, who suggests an inquiry into the duties assigned to the Board of Trade, the Home Office, and the Local Government Board, and to this I personally have no objection with a view to introducing something nearer equality in Cabinet position, even if it is necessary to cut off something from above. I see no reason for the distinctions in the Cabinet. But the House must bear in mind that such an inquiry would take a long time, and if there is a strong case for this change on its merits we should urge the Government to make the change irrespective of what might be done in other Departments later. I do not believe it will be found practicable or desirable to separate labour from the work of other Departments, and if there is an idea that one Minister should advocate the claims of labour and that a Minister of Commerce should have charge of the interests of employers, that would be the worst possible change. It would put an end to the work of conciliation and be extremely undesirable. Possibly it might be urged that the head of the Board of Trade should be a business man. That view I have never held. In such a position there should be the best man of ability and character available apart from what his training may have been. Experience has shown there is no necessity for any restriction of the kind. What is the strongest ground for making this change? It is that the President of the Board of Trade stands always between capital and labour in any dispute that may arise, and no Minister of the Crown holds a position in which more depends upon the skill and judgment with which his duties are carried out. The success of his conciliation powers depends as much on the Minister's personality as upon the office which he holds. In the railway dispute there was an illustration of that. We all of us know that the President of the Board of Trade is a man of ability and courage, and both sides know that the position he took up was the position of the Government; and the fact that there could be no attempt to get behind him to the Government made the right hon. Gentleman's task the easier. On all grounds it is desirable there should be a man of the first rank at the head of the Board of Trade. Many distinguished men have filled the position in the past, but they have all been on their way up, they have never come back, and a man of an entirely different class might be there on another occasion. It is no disparagement to say that Cabinet Ministers are not all heaven-born statesmen. There is a head and a tail, and the point to consider is whether this Department should be under the head or the tail. I hope hon. Gentlemen who take part in this discussion will put away from their minds whether or not other Departments should also be raised, and consider whether they have a strong enough case now to allow this change to be made.

Amendment proposed—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'But we humbly beg to represent to Your Majesty that in the interests of the trade and commerce of the United Kingdom it is highly important that the *status* of the Board of Trade should be raised, and that it should be placed on a par with the office of a Secretary of State.' "—(*Sir William Holland.*)

Question proposed, "That these words be there added."

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.): I am of opinion that it is a question whether this subject, which is not a matter for Party discussion, is conveniently raised in the form of an Amendment to the Address, but I do not complain that my hon. friend has availed himself of the opportunity. The hon. Member who seconded the Amendment has dwelt on the personal aspect of the matter, but that is rather to be deprecated. True, Cabinet Ministers are not all heaven-born, nor are Under Secretaries or any class of politicians; but all in varying degree endeavour to make their contributions to the common stock. I am anxious in the few remarks I am going to make upon the matter to take it entirely out of the sphere of controversy. The arguments of my hon. friend last night went not so much to the political head of the Department as to the Department itself. As to the expediency of changing the title of the holders of the office, that, to my mind, is of very little importance. What is really of importance is that a Department such as the Board of Trade, which, by general consent, has aggregated a number of the most important functions of the State, and which comes in contact with so many different bodies, and with our commercial interests both at home and abroad, should no longer be considered as being in a position of subordination as regards *status* to other ancient offices which, perhaps, in the course of time have not developed to the same extent, nor shown the same amount of useful activity. So far as the present holders of the offices referred to in the various Amendments are concerned, the President of the Board of Trade and the President of the Local Government Board,—I know from what they have said that it is their intention that any change which the House should ultimately agree to make in the *status* of those Departments should not affect in any way their own personal emoluments. I pass from that to what is really the case presented by my hon. friend. I agree, in the main, with what he has said. I think the case has been made out, or a case can be made out, for what is called raising the *status* of the Board of Trade; but, as I said a moment ago, that is a matter which does not so much affect the head of the Department as the whole of its *personnel*. It is a very great hardship in the present arrangements of our Civil Service that officers who are performing important duties in a Department like the Board of Trade, duties as responsible and as delicate, and certainly as laborious as those of any other Department, are, from hierarchical rules of service, put in an inferior position, as regards not only emoluments, but also *status*. It is far more important in their interests than in the interests of the transient and embarrassed phantom who, from time to time, is nominally and ostensibly at their head. It is far more in the interests of getting the best men for the work, and for the most efficient discharge of these duties, that changes of this kind should be advocated. As I have said, a *prima facie* case has been made out in regard to the Board of Trade; but I cannot agree with the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down that it is possible to treat that Department by itself and separate it from all the other Departments. I do not think it is possible to do it. We all feel that it is not merely sentiment, that it is not merely prejudice, for when gentlemen like my right hon. friend the Member for Wimbledon or the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Dublin, who formerly discharged with conspicuous ability the duties of President of the Local Government Board, come forward and say: "You must take into account the Local Government Board also, when dealing with the Board of Trade," they are thinking most not of their own personal position, but rightly, properly, and legitimately of the great work which they know is being done by officers in that Department, and of the new and invidious distinctions which would be created if we raised the *status* of the Board of Trade and did nothing for the Local Government Board. I am not using that as an argument against dealing with the Board of Trade, but I do say that we cannot deal with these matters separately. Looking at the Paper I see another Amendment which I believe represents the views of Chambers of Agriculture, proposing that similar treatment should be given to the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries. Then there is an Amendment by my hon. friend behind me, on which, as a Scottish Member, I should have very great difficulty in expressing an adverse opinion, with reference to the Scottish Office. Various other offices, I believe, are mentioned in the Amendments, and if the matter is to proceed to a conclusion, we will have to consider what is the proper course for the Government and the House to take under the circumstances. I think I ought to say this also. My hon. friend the Member for Glasgow has an Amendment which I do not read quite in the same sense as the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down. I cannot think that my hon. friend means, or those who are associated with him mean, that we should bring all the duties relating to labour subjects into one Department. I do not think he means to put that in any partisan spirit as representing labour distinguished from capital, and I cannot imagine a proposal which would be more hostile to the real interests of labour. But I read my hon. friend's proposal in a totally different sense. I read it to mean rather that the time has come when we should group under the head of one Department the various subjects which are connected with it. I will give one illustration, which I think will probably bring out my hon. friend's intention. I was for some time at the Home Office, where there is, among its Departments, a Department of Mines. Across the road, the Board of Trade has under its control and supervision the Department of Merchant Shipping and Harbours and Railways. From a scientific and logical point of view, it is very difficult to justify the segregation of these various subjects, which really touch one another at a thousand points, and as to which any Ministers who deal with them ought to have a common policy. But, as it is, they are dealt with by the heads of different Departments; and I imagine it is with the object of dealing with that state of things that my hon. friend has given notice of his Amendment. Is not the general inference to be drawn—an inference which I think the House, with almost unanimous consent, will draw from the considerations which I have ventured to lay before them—that the time has come when an inquiry ought to be made into the whole matter of the allocation of functions, and the relative *status* and emoluments of one Department compared with others, with a view to seeing whether we cannot arrive—as I think we can by general agreement—at a change which would redistribute the duties of the Departments more scientifically, which would remove invidious distinctions, and which would tend to the advantage and efficiency of the public service? If the House agrees with that view, as I rather think it does, I would suggest that my hon. friend might be content with this very useful discussion and not press his Amendment.

MR. WALTER LONG (Dublin, S.): I entirely agree with the suggestion which has come from the Government. While I fully admit what has been stated by the mover and seconder, yet as one who has been associated with a particular Department, I feel that one obtains a knowledge of its work and business which cannot be possessed by anybody who has not served. I have had the fortune to serve for ten years as Secretary and as President of the Local Government Board, and if the Amendment had stood by itself, it would have been my duty as well as my pleasure to put before the House to the best of my ability the claims of the Local Government Board to consideration. But that duty is rendered unnecessary by the announcement which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has made, in the first place that the whole question is to be the subject of an inquiry; and, in the second place, which in my judgment is the most vital part of the Chancellor's statement, that the inquiry is not to be limited merely to the *status* of one Department, or the claims of an individual to special recognition, but is to include the possibility of redistribution of the duties of the different Departments, so that in future they shall be allotted in a rather more business-like and scientific fashion than they are at present. I entirely agree with the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the personal aspect of the case is not by any means the most important; indeed, it is hardly worthy consideration; but still, I think the personal aspect cannot be altogether excluded. The right hon. Gentleman will remember occasions when Government questions of grave importance connected with legislation have been in passage through a Department, and when something occurred in the Government which led to the vacating of one of the higher offices. In such circumstances it would be only proper and reasonable that the occupant of a subordinate position—I suggest this now for consideration—should feel that he was entitled to promotion, and if he did not get the office it would be regarded as a slur in his particular case. But that must be the case so long as there is this great distinction between the different offices. I may be permitted to say one word on the Chancellor's argument as to the *personnel* of the Departments, as a whole. The Local Government Board, the Board of Trade, and certain other Departments of the permanent Civil Service, are doing the same work. They have letters dealing with the same subjects, the same kind of operation is gone through, the same extensive operations are embarked upon as in other Departments, yet the work is not only done at a different salary by men who have given their whole lives to the work, but they have a different pension when the time comes for them to retire. That, I submit, cannot be fair in regard to civil servants who fill these great Public Departments. Therefore, I heard with the greatest satisfaction the Chancellor of the Exchequer's statement that the inquiry will not be limited to one Department; and I hope the terms of reference will be wide enough to enable full investigation to be made into the duties and emoluments of the respective Departments. May I say one word with regard to the Chancellor's announcement in regard to the President of the Board of Trade and the President of the Local Government Board? We, when in office, made proposals which were more limited in their character, and I am now very glad that they should be reconsidered. In connection with those proposals we had to announce that the existing holders of offices would not take advantage of any improvement in the position of their respective Departments. I was at the time one of the holders of office who felt that we could not recommend a change of that kind without basing our arguments on a self-denying attitude, saying: "If Parliament does it, we will not benefit from it." But I must point out to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that at that time we were getting, at all events, towards the end of the Parliament. There is this difference on the present occasion, that we are only in the middle of the Parliament; so, if the thing is right, if the Government decide to do it, and if Parliament approves of this change being effected, obviously it would be right that the existing holders of these offices should not be bound by any precedent which may have been set; and I earnestly hope that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will do his best to press upon his colleagues the abandonment of this policy of self-denial, in respect of a change which, in the circumstances, is one of justice, not in regard to themselves only, but in regard to the work of the departments over which they preside. And if the change is made, I hope it will be as soon as the Government are able to give effect to the recommendations of the Committee. As far as we are concerned, we cordially support the suggestion that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has made, and I sincerely hope that out of this inquiry may come proposals which will lead to the removal of an injustice which I think has pressed hardly upon some of the most hard-worked Departments of the State.

SIR J. RANDLES (Cumberland, Cockermouth) said he would like to emphasise one view of the question which he was inclined to think might be overlooked. They had heard it stated that the initiation of this movement had come very largely from the Chambers of Commerce. He could not speak with any authority on that side of the question, but he would point out that when the Associated Chambers of Commerce passed the resolution which bore on this question they pointed out the increasing difficulty of promoting British trade particularly owing to the active assistance given by foreign Governments to their own traders, and they urged the Government to bring in at an early date the Bill foreshadowed in the King's Speech of 1905 for the conversion of the office of the Board of Trade into the Department of a Minister for Commerce with the object of extending and increasing its sphere of influence. If a business man had business relations abroad he might have to deal with the Colonial, the Foreign, or the India Office on a purely commercial question, and it was very desirable that there should be a Minister for Commerce with such *status*, and with such influence and recognised authority for interfering that he might be legitimately approached by a business man, so that through him such representations as might be necessary could be made to the other Departments. In his view it was necessary that the *status* of the Department should be improved, and that they should have more effective service from it. In these days trade was being worked by widespread organisations and combinations of employers and workmen. The system of small traders was disappearing, and large manufacturers and merchants found it necessary to work together in groups. The same applied to labour and industry. These organisations on either side would more and more require the services of a Minister of State to carry through negotiations which they had failed to bring to a successful issue, and a Minister for Commerce with *status* and authority might prevent conflicts between these organisations. The hon. Baronet who moved the Motion had pointed out how effective the Patent Laws had been in the reduction of unemployment in certain industries. That was a splendid illustration of the way in which a business man in office at the head of a State Department was able by an intelligent appreciation of commercial facts to bring into operation the powers which his office gave him in order to assist business men. A Minister for Commerce would do much for the trade interests of the country. In view of the fact that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had promised a full inquiry into the matter he did not think it necessary to say anything further except to impress upon the Government the importance of looking at the question, not only from the official point of view, but from the point of view of those who had initiated this movement, the Chambers of Commerce, the representatives of industry, and to do what they could to increase the efficiency of the Department and to give it such a position in the eyes of the commercial and industrial world that they might more and more look to it for such help as the Government could give. He was very glad to hear the pronouncement which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had made.

MR. BARNES (Glasgow, Blackfriars) said it was not his intention to intervene for more than a few moments, but he wanted to state the position of the Labour Party. It had been said by the late Secretary to the Board of Trade that they wanted to put a man forward as Minister for Labour or to collect all those matters pertaining to labour and put them under the charge of one man who should be in some sense a partisan or an advocate of labour claims in the Government Department. It had been put on the other side by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that they had in their mind that these matters appertaining to labour should be governed by and put in charge of a Minister for Labour. That was the view that they had in their mind. They had not in mind that partisanship should be perpetuated in the Government or that there should be a man advocating the claims of labour and another advocating the claims of capital inside the Government, but that those matters appertaining to labour that were at present dealt with by conflicting and overlapping authorities and therefore inefficiently, should be dealt with under one head, in the interests not only of labour but of the community as a whole. So far as he had been able to gather the views of the Government, they would not be disposed to accept all that had been said. From the speech of the mover of the Amendment he rather gathered that it was more a personal matter than anything else, a sort of tribute to the manner in which the President of the Board of Trade had managed to settle certain difficulties. But as he gathered now what was involved was not only a larger salary to the President but larger salaries from the top to the bottom of all in the Board of Trade, which was another matter altogether, and he would not like to be pledged to any proposal of that character. He remembered the Member for Hoxton attributing to the Member for Battersea the idea that no man was worth more than £500 a year. The statement was first made by a man who preceded both those hon. Members and who was perhaps a better man than either, a gentleman who had represented Walworth in that House and who had held it as a firm conviction that men who got more than £500 got it because of the economic dependence and lack of power of those who had to be content with a good deal less. He thought a very good case had to be shown before they as a Party could assent to this wholesale increase of salaries from top to bottom of the Board of Trade or any other Department.

MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS (Sheffield, Ecclesall) asked whether it was proposed to appoint a Committee of the House to inquire into the subject.

MR. ASQUITH: It is obviously desirable that it should be in the first instance a Departmental Committee. Any proposal they make will have to be sanctioned by the House.

MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS hoped the inquiry would be held forthwith, and that, if possible, they would have the Report during the present session. The matter was considered one of very great importance by the commercial classes of the country. It had been before the Chambers of Commerce for years, and they considered that the time had come to do away with the present obsolete system under which the salary was the same as was in vogue in the time of George IV.

*MR. BARNARD (Kidderminster) welcomed what the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said as to the consideration that would be given to all the ideas which these various Amendments suggested. He was surprised and regretted that the Member for South Dublin, whilst alluding to the various offices which he had held, seemed altogether to forget the Board of Agriculture. As he had been asked by the Central Chambers of Agriculture to say a word he would like to tell the House that they felt that the whole tendency of modern legislation, perhaps necessarily, had been to cater more for trade and commerce for the towns than for the rural districts. He offered no complaint except that if he had moved the Amendment which stood in his name he would have reminded the House more in detail that there was a very strong reason why agriculture should be represented in a powerful manner and that the Department should occupy a high *status*, because in the proposed legislation they saw that the question of their getting back to the land was always being urged. He reminded the House of a remark made by the President of the Local Government Board that he would give ten years of his life if the effect of that measure might be to take the people back to the land. He quite agreed with him. But while he desired that to happen it appeared a reasonable proposition that if the attempt at legislation touching the land was largely prompted by motives of this kind regarding great social problems, it was a little bit hard that the great agricultural centres should be asked to tax themselves 1d. in the £ for such objects. He regretted that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Dublin did not mention agriculture. The Central Chamber felt that it was too often forgotten and overlooked. For his part he welcomed what the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said, and he thanked him very much.

*MR. MORTON (Sutherland) said it was somewhat remarkable that although yesterday the Government cleverly got rid of an Amendment asking them to consider their expenditure in regard to armaments. They had found time for the consideration of an increased expenditure on themselves or some future Ministers. Although it was not a proposition to increase the salaries of the present Ministers it meant an increased expenditure in the future. Instead of raising the salary of the President of the Board of Trade to £5,000 he thought a better course would be to bring down the salaries of some other Minister to £2,000. They had been told that this was a question of *status*. His opinion was that that was all humbug and was simply being used to get an addition of £3,000 to the present salaries. The question of *status* was settled when a Minister was made a Member of the Cabinet, for they all had the same *status*. Occasionally the President of the Board of Trade and the President of the Local Government Board were not Members of the Cabinet and then their *status* was not so great as that of Cabinet Ministers. It was said that other countries paid their Ministers more than this country did, but he did not believe that that statement was correct. The proper comparison was to compare the total payments to all Ministers. In this country the total paid to Ministers amounted to about £180,000 per annum, and that was the sum that changed hands when parties crossed over from one side of the House to the other. He did not know of any other country which had such a large expenditure as £180,000 a year upon Ministers. ["Yes."] The mover of the Amendment said nothing about the *status* of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

*MR. SPEAKER: The position of the Archbishop is wholly irrelevant to this discussion.

*MR. MORTON said that the Archbishop was one of the Commissioners on the Board of Trade, and he (Mr. Morton) hoped that the result of the inquiry might lead to his removal, as the business of the Board of Trade was quite out of his line. They had been told that they ought to make this change on account of the settlement of the railway dispute by the Board of Trade. He was glad a strike was prevented, although he could not say that in his opinion the question had been settled satisfactorily. The only thing that had happened so far was that railway fares had been increased, more especially week-end tickets to Scotland, by some 20 or 30 per cent. He did not know whether there had been a secret deal between the railway companies and the Board of Trade under which this increase in fares was to be allowed. It had been said that this increase of salaries should be dealt with separately. That was all very well, but if they allowed it in one they would have to allow it in the other Departments. No doubt the President of the Local Government Board would think that he was as much entitled to an increase as any other Minister, and the same view might also be taken by the President of the Board of Agriculture, the Secretary for Scotland, the First Commissioner of Works, and the President of the Board of Education. Probably the Postmaster-General would make a similar claim. The right hon. Gentleman had told them that the salaries of some of the permanent officials ought also to be considered during the promised inquiry. His experience of these officials was that they were all paid exceedingly well, and the House ought not to increase salaries when financial affairs were in such a bad state in this country, and when the income-tax remained at 1s. in the £. [AN HON. MEMBER: Ninepence.] He knew it was partly at ninepence but it was said that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would get as much out of the ninepence as he received when it was

1s., so that did not make any difference. All other people's salaries had been reduced owing to increased taxation and other charges, and in the face of that fact was it right that they should now consider an increase of the salaries of State officials? When they were proposing to spend other people's money in this way they ought to consider the state of the country and the absolute necessity of practising economy in every way. The extraordinary increase from £40,000,000 to £50,000,000 in the expense of governing the country since 1895, could not possibly be kept up, and in the interests of the country it must be reduced. If they were going to increase salaries all round, how could the Government possibly carry out the pledges which had been given in regard to economy?

Sir WILLIAM HOLLAND said that after the statement made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer he would ask leave to withdraw his Amendment.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.) asked if the Chancellor of the Exchequer could give the House any indication as to the nature of the proposed inquiry? He assumed that it would not be by a Parliamentary Committee.

Mr. ASQUITH: No, it will not be a Parliamentary Committee.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. F.E. SMITH (Liverpool, Walton), in moving an Amendment to the Address, expressing regret that His Majesty's Plenipotentiaries at the Hague Conference were not authorised to forward the reduction of international armaments by assenting to the principle of the immunity of enemy merchant vessels, other than carriers of contraband, in time of war, said: This Amendment raises a question on which a strong, and I think I might almost say without any inaccuracy, unanimous opinion has long been held among Chambers of Commerce in this country, and generally among the commercial community. I do not, of course, desire to suggest that in this and other cognate questions there may not be considerations of such paramountcy as to over-ride the views of the commercial community, but the circumstance that there has been for many years unanimity so complete is one which I think entitles the proposal I bring forward to the careful consideration of the House. I am most anxious to make it clear that the Amendment is not in any sense a party one, and that it is not brought forward in any party spirit. Indeed, I know that it will not secure the assent of a considerable number of my friends with whom I commonly vote. I am so anxious that it should not be supposed that there is any party tinge in the Amendment that I do not propose to carry it to a division, but merely to initiate a debate which I hope may usefully guide public opinion on one of the most pressing questions of maritime policy. Everyone, of course, agrees that the pressure of armaments is growing more and more intolerable among the civilised countries of the world, and the only difference of opinion, if there is a difference of opinion, between the two sides of the House with respect to the proposal brought forward in the Amendment of which the hon. Member for the Falkirk Burghs gave notice † is as to the possibility of effecting any change on the lines on which the hon. Gentleman and his friends proposed to proceed. The view which he and, I believe, many others hold is that no mitigation of the present standard of armaments is likely to be obtained by a general or merely abstract declaration. In other words, the only prospect of obtaining a reduction in the pressure of national armaments, is one which depends on a concrete modification of the circumstances which exist to-day, and which lead other nations to think that their interests necessarily demand armaments on the scale presently maintained. The Prime Minister lately contributed to the *Nation*

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† The Amendment referred to was as follows:—"But, while rejoicing that Your Majesty's relations with Foreign Powers continue to be friendly, we humbly express our regret that there is no indication of any intention to reduce expenditure on armaments."

an article which I read with very great interest, and at the conclusion of that article dealing with the Navy and with the proposals for reduction which it was proposed to put forward at the Hague Conference, he said—

> "It has been suggested that our example will count for nothing because our preponderant naval position will remain unimpaired. The sea power of this country implies no challenge to any single State or group of States. I am persuaded that throughout the world that power is recognised as non-aggressive and innocent of design against the commercial freedom of other States."

The only comment I can make upon that is that under the existing circumstances it is profoundly untrue that, so far as Continental nations are concerned, they regard our naval power as non-aggressive and as innocent of design against their own mercantile marine. The proposition is capable of very simple statement. The statement always put forward by the Admiralty in defence of their policy has been that we possess in the maintenance of the existing Navy an extremely valuable weapon, which is likely to prevent the outbreak of war simply because of the extreme risk which foreign nations would run, having regard to our great maritime superiority of strength and to the fact that we should be able to destroy their mercantile marine or confine their ships to harbours. To say that we cannot agree to a modification of the existing practice because it supplies us with a weapon so powerful that we could destroy their commerce, and to say at the same time that the existence of the Fleet at its present strength supplies no menace at all to Continental Powers is a clear contradiction in terms. I do not desire to discuss this proposal in any way upon a humanitarian basis. It is quite clear that, so far as humanity is concerned, there is nothing inhumane in the maintenance of the existing system. Nor is it an effective method of argument to rest the case for immunity from war upon the supposed analogy between land and sea warfare. In point of fact it is not possible to discuss it by reference to that analogy. The question is—should the existing practice be maintained on its own merits and not in reference to the interests of other countries? I venture to ask the House to consider what advantage the existing system confers upon us, and in the second place what advantage it confers upon our possible enemies, and in relation to the second question, what disadvantage it imposes on us. First of all what advantage do we at the present time derive from the maintenance of the system so strong and so obvious as ought to prevent us from effecting a change. In considering the advantage it is necessary to make one or two preliminary hypotheses. The first hypothesis is the naval supremacy of this country, and the second that we have effectually succeeded in blockading the whole of the coast. These are the circumstances in which the advantage we might gain would most strongly exist. Given these two elements we could on the outbreak of war suppress the carrying trade of any opponent with which we might be likely to be engaged in war. The first observation on that point is that, although it is very true if you suppose the opponent is either France or Germany, it is far from being true or obvious if you suppose that the country with which you are engaged in warfare is not a country east of the Straits of Dover, but some distant Power. Take the case for instance of Japan or the United States of America. It is perfectly clear that this country cannot be in a position to police seas so distant in such a way as to make it certain that we can suppress the whole, or a considerable part, of the carrying trade of our opponents just as if the Power with which we were engaged were France or Germany. But I am willing to assume that we have been successful in capturing part of the fleet of the enemy with whom we are engaged, and also in confining a considerable portion of their mercantile marine to harbours. So far as any Power with whom we are likely to be engaged is concerned, although that would be a serious blow to them, it would not be a paralysing blow, and it would most certainly not be a destructive blow. Let us consider it first of all in connection with the question of food. So far as food supply is concerned, any opponent would be perfectly able to obtain their own food with almost as much freedom and ease as at the present time. In the first place, they could obtain it in neutral bottoms unless contraband of war, and they could also obtain it through railway sources. Take the case of Germany. Apart from the fact that that country is able to supply the population with a very much larger proportion of the necessary food from its own soil it would also be able to carry in the balance without very serious difficulty by railway. There would not be any insuperable difficulty so far as Germany is concerned, because the oversea trade would come through Dutch and Belgian ports. So far as the commerce of the country other than the food supply is concerned, it is clear in the same way that the effect on such countries would not in any way be as disastrous as to this country. Dealing with general merchandise, although there would, of course, be temporary inconvenience and dislocation, in the same way it could be conveyed by land transit. If that be so, it becomes necessary to ask what is the effectiveness of the blow which is considered so important. Let us ask the Admiralty clearly and explicitly to state the great advantages this country would obtain by the maintenance of the existing practice. Inquiries made in this country and in France and Germany enable us to pronounce a view which, though not so authoritative as the Admiralty view must be, is one which is commonly held by persons other than naval experts. Their view is that the immediate prospect on the outbreak of war with France or Germany would be twofold. In the first place, a considerable part of the seagoing Fleets of these countries would remain in harbour, and, in the second place, a great part of their trade would be carried in neutral bottoms. The disadvantage of that to France and Germany would be obvious. In the first place, they would have to pay additional freight, and, in the second place, for a considerable period they would be inconvencied by the suspension of the carrying trade. Captures would not be considerable even if our supremacy were effectively asserted. The extreme mischief which could be caused to France or Germany would be the temporary dislocation of their carrying trade, which would be partly transferred to neutral bottoms and partly borne by land transport. Their food supply and the importation of raw materials would not be fatally affected. We are told—and it was said, this argument carried great weight with the Admiralty—that the knowledge of France and Germany that at the outbreak of hostilities we might strike a serious blow at their mercantile marine was one of the greatest guarantees of peace. The answer to that is that it would have no such effect. You cannot give a greater guarantee to other countries for peace than the possibility of destroying a powerful and costly Navy costing hundreds of millions of pounds on which sea power depends. You cannot say to Continental countries who have put this mighty and implacable Armadas to the hazard that a further guarantee of peace is that they may suffer from some temporary dislocation of trade. As long as this country maintains the existing system we can never go to other countries with an appearance of good faith and say that we propose a general reduction of military armaments. Let me ask the House to consider what is the effect of the existing system as far as we are concerned. And here an obvious reflection occurs at once, and that is that we have more to lose and more to protect than any other Power in the world. This country possesses half the merchant tonnage of the world—very nearly twice the tonnage of the United States and nearly five times that of Germany. What would be the effect on our trade at the outbreak of war? I assume again that this country maintains an effective naval supremacy. Let me remark in passing that since the Napoleonic wars the existing system has not been tested. The hypothesis is that if we maintain the supremacy of our fleet there would be no danger of an organised attack on our commerce. But the career of the "Alabama" shows that although there might not be an organised attempt to destroy our merchant shipping it is possible by means of swift cruisers to inflict such an amount of injury on our carrying trade as would be, if not irreparable, at least very great. It may be said that the Admiralty can take precautions on the outbreak of war for the protection of our merchant vessels; but it was pointed out in the Report of the recent Commission on Food Supply that if a portion of the Naval forces at our disposal were deflected from the main operations of the war for any purpose whatever, the general conduct of the war might be injuriously affected. It is clear that without such protection by the Fleet many English vessels might be destroyed by single enemy cruisers. The Commission considered what the effect of that liability would be upon the interests of this country. They said, in the first place, that the destruction of such vessels would be extremely serious so far as the price of food and raw materials was concerned. The result would be panic prices for both food and raw material. The commercial disaster was not exhausted by that statement because the experience of previous wars showed that the immediate effect would be the inflation of the rates of insurance and the derangement of business in every class of the community. Therefore, in the first place, we have no inconsiderable risk of the capture of our mercantile marine; inasmuch as the fleet could not afford complete protection to our carrying trade, and in the second place, the price of food and raw materials would be incalculably enhanced. As to the price of food. Since the Declaration of Paris food carried in neutral bottoms would be immune from capture. But there was uncertainty as to the proportion of such bottoms to the total number of importing vessels. The Lords of the Admiralty have taken into consideration interference with our food supply as one of the problems which deserve constant and careful attention. In spite of comparative immunity so far as a portion of our food supplies carried in neutral bottoms is concerned, it is clear that we should otherwise be subject to the greatest risks. I ask what that might mean? So far as the American supply is concerned, some portion of it might be carried in neutral bottoms, but the great share of the American supply is at present carried in British bottoms, and would in the event of war be carried in British bottoms liable to capture. So far as the Australian and Canadian supplies—and these are growing—and the Indian supply are concerned, they would be carried in British bottoms liable to capture. The mere risk or liability to capture would enormously increase the rates of insurance and the effect would be one of the greatest conceivable misfortunes to this country. The figures of the amount of our food which is imported are very striking. Eighty per cent. of our total wheat supplies is imported, 40 per cent. of our meat, 60 per cent. of our bacon, 50 per cent. of our cheese, and 70 per cent. of our butter, so that all those necessary means of existence would be exposed to the risk of capture. But it is not merely the case of our food supply; there is the case of the raw materials for our manufactures. The risk of capture of these would cause an immediate paralysis of our commerce on the outbreak of a naval war. Hon. Members for Manchester and Liverpool are well aware that practically the whole of our cotton and almost all our wool are imported from abroad by over-sea routes and the great proportion is carried in British ships, so that apart from the pressure on food on the outbreak of war every mill in Lancashire and Yorkshire would be distressed, and every operative in them would be exposed to the total cessation of employment. Many of these problems are dealt with as if history had not advanced since the days of the Napoleonic Wars. The Lord Chancellor before he reached his present high office wrote a very able letter to *The Times*—if I may be pardoned the impertinence of saying so—in which he pointed out that in old days it was a distinguishing circumstance that the land routes of Continental countries had not been developed. But now that these land routes have been developed you might by one stroke destroy the whole sea-going adit to the markets of Continental countries, but you would not make it impossible for them to live and carry on their business. But with us the result would be very different if an effective blow was struck at our shipping. When it was contended that the effective method of making peace in the days of Louis XV. and Napoleon was the destruction of the mercantile marine because the neutral flag did not protect goods carried by sea and land transport was impracticable, the answer was that we had not then the Declaration of Paris. That Declaration was accepted formally by all the great Powers except the United States, who, however, acted upon it in recent wars. Before that Declaration was agreed to a belligerent was at liberty not only to destroy the merchant vessels of the enemy, but also to detain the vessels of neutrals which contained the enemy's goods, and to seize these goods. Until that rule was altered by the Declaration of Paris it was a most powerful weapon in the hands of a belligerent. Supposing a war broke out to-morrow you would be able but for that Declaration not only to capture the merchant vessels of your enemy and seize their cargoes, but also to prevent their commerce being carried in neutral bottoms, so that you could strike a decisive blow at their trade. Imagine what that would mean if you struck that blow at Germany or America. You would actually prevent any of their trade being carried on at all, because you would say that not one single pound of American or German merchandise should be carried at sea without risk of capture. You then would strike a paralysing blow at the commerce of America or Germany, but the moment we conceded as we did by the Declaration of Paris the right of neutral vessels to carry the goods of our enemies, the practice to which I have alluded became an anachronism, which is of little advantage and indeed no small disadvantage to this country on the outbreak of war. I should like to call the attention of the House to the circumstance that the views I am pressing upon it have received the support of men of all parties whose opinions are worthy of support. That I think will not be disputed. It is not unworthy of note also, that Mill, who gave serious study to this question, was altogether opposed to the Declaration of Paris, and that he altogether resisted the extension of the immunities I have described; but he also took the view that the moment you had allowed the principle of free ships, free goods, it was desirable to carry the principle further and prevent the whole mercantile marine being captured in time of war. The expressed desire of Germany has never wavered from the earliest days. In 1866 when Germany was at war with Italy and Austria, by arrangement between the belligerent Powers, it was agreed that this practice should be observed, and the German Chancellor aid it down recently that the German policy has undergone no modification. It is undisputed that at the Hague Conference the assent of Germany would not have been withheld had the proposal I make been brought forward. As far as the United States of America are concerned, they have always qualified the Declaration of Paris by saying that they would agree to the abolition of privateering if the immunity from capture was applied to all ships, and the Marcy amendment still continues to represent the deliberate policy of the United States. That very experienced stratagist, Captain Mahon, also at one time expressed the views which have been held by so many experts on this subject, and which I have attempted to lay before the House, though I am aware that he has since modified them. I would ask the House to consider one further observation on the general question, and it is this. When we are told that we can strike a blow at the commerce of our enemies, have those who made that statement any impression of the condition of things prevailing in regard to maritime and fire insurance? The editor of the *Economist* in a very ingenious speech took an extravagant illustration in order to avoid any misunderstanding. He said supposing that Germany and England together were bombarding San Francisco, and in consequence a fire broke out comparable to the fire which followed the recent earthquake. The result of that fire was to cause many millions of pounds of damage, and interesting questions of international insurance would arise if the fire had broken out in consequence of bombardment. In that case England would have paid £8,000,000 of the insurance and Germany £3,000,000. The result of bombarding the town, therefore, would have been that £11,000,000 would have been paid by underwriters of the bombarding countries. If you apply that illustration to maritime underwriters of mercantile insurances, the result is still more remarkable. It is sufficient for me to say that a large percentage of the mercantile insurance of the world is done in London. So that in order to strike a really damaging blow at the enemy we are face to face with this problem: first of all, he may not bring his ships out of harbour at all; secondly, he may carry his merchandise in foreign ships which are protected; and thirdly, if he does bring his ships out of harbour and you destroy them, English underwriters have to pay a large proportion of the damage. These considerations suggest reasons why the change should be made. So long ago as the days of Lord Palmerston the force of this argument was so clearly felt that Lord Palmerston said—

> "I cannot help hoping that those principles of war which are applied to hostilities by land, may be extended to hostilities by sea, so that private property shall no longer be the object of aggression on either side."

I do not think that Lord Palmerston can be said to have been in favour of every country but his own. The Secretary to the Admiralty in his pre-official days expressed himself with most admirable cogency on this subject. Speaking of the proposed Peace Conference, he stated his views in the following forcible and temperate language—

> "Why should there be panic and consequent rise in prices? Why should there be any need for considering any of the numerous and costly experiments which the Commission has had under consideration? The answer is that the danger arises almost entirely from the perpetuation of the usages of 'International Law' permitting a belligerent to seize and hold the defenceless and inoffensive private merchantman plying his beneficial trade on the high seas."

That is the opinion of the Secretary to the Admiralty before the Hague Conference, and the Lord Chancellor also said—

> "Last year President Roosevelt declared in favour of a new International Conference at the Hague, and notified that, among other matters for deliberation, the United States intended again to press this very subject on the attention of the Powers. Unquestionably, the American President, with the immense authority he now wields, will exert every effort to attain his point. I trust that His Majesty's Government will avail themselves of this unique opportunity. I urge it not upon any ground of sentiment or of humanity (indeed, no operation of war inflicts less suffering than the capture of unarmed vessels at sea) but upon the ground that in the balance of argument, coolly weighed, the interests of Great Britain will gain much from a change long and eagerly desired by the great majority of other Powers."

One is surprised and disappointed to find the proposal so commended before the Government came into office, and with which I and others on this side of the House have long had a warm sympathy — it is a little disappointing to discover that the instructions given through the mouth of the Secretary of State to the Plenipotentiaries of the Hague Conference were so extremely uncompromising in their character, and so exceedingly destructive of the rational argument upon which members of the Government purported to base their position. I think I shall have done justice to the instructions given by His Majesty's Government and to the grounds upon which they purported to base themselves, by saying that although it seemed to them for other reasons the adoption of this immunity is very much to be desired, first from the humanitarian point of view, and in the second place, as far as the material interests of this country are concerned, yet because this concession would destroy the character and usefulness of the commercial blockade it cannot be conceded. There is no other reason given, and I would ask the House to consider what the force of that argument is. What is the commercial blockade? It is a comparatively new doctrine of very doubtful legality, and one in regard to which I venture to say as far as this country is concerned, there is the very gravest doubt whether if we were engaged to-morrow in a large war the great countries of the world would recognise it. Can it possibly be said that if England were at war with the United States of America, it would be possible for this country to proclaim a blockade of the whole of the Californian seaboard, when the whole operations of the belligerents were confined to the frontiers of Canada? I do not think the Powers will assent to that, if the pretensions of commercial blockade are maintained in their present shape. As it at present exists it is enforced on neutral ships. Supposing a war broke out between Germany and the United States, and Germany declared a commercial blockade of American ports, the shipping which would be most interfered with would be English shipping, and disputes and disturbance would arise. There is one concluding observation that I have to make on what is believed to be the position of the Admiralty in this matter. It would be idle and foolish not to treat with the greatest possible respect the opinion of the Admiralty. As we are not yet aware what position they take up, I am not going to ask the House to divide on this occasion. But when we are asked to consider what the Admiralty's view upon this question is, we are surely entitled to make one or two observations as to what the position of the Admiralty has been in the past in relation to proposed reforms. It will be in the recollection of the House that many years ago the Admiralty produced cogent, convincing, and conclusive arguments to show that steam could not be adapted to the use of ships of war. Shortly afterwards they produced another statement conclusively proving that armour plates could never possibly be used for ships of war. The Admiralty therefore, having made mistakes in matters of this kind, which were proper matters for naval experts, must not be supposed immune from the possibility of mistake in a case which is not a question for naval experts, apart from what is called the strategic problem. I do not claim to be an expert in this matter, but I do say that apart from the strategic problem it is a commercial problem affecting all the large towns and seaports of this country; further, it is a political problem deeply and vitally concerning Members of this House. I have no desire to bring forward this question in any spirit of controversy, but merely as a question deserving the careful consideration of this House, and therefore I propose to withdraw the Amendment, but I trust, although there can be no division upon it on this occasion, there will be a discussion upon it which will result in some explanation from the Government as to the line they take, and some declaration as to whether there shall not be a Committee to inquire into the whole question. It is in this spirit I beg to move the Amendment standing in my name.

*MR. J. M. ROBERTSON (Northumberland, Tyneside): It seems to me to be a good augury for pacific developments in the future that the Amendment which I now rise to second should be moved from the other side of the House. I fear the hon. Member who moved it is in a minority in his Party on this matter, but quite apart from his eloquence, the strength of the case he has put forward is such, that I venture to predict a rapidly increasing acceptance of it among all parties. In any case the hon and learned Member has given the Government an opportunity of defending themselves. I can assure Ministers that the instructions they gave to their representative at the Hague Conference upon this subject caused feelings of surprise and sorrow to many of their warmest supporters. In 1906 a Motion was moved from these benches which made for the restriction of armaments, and the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Foreign Affairs told us that the Government not only accepted, but welcomed the Motion. Then or later, too, he drew a very moving picture of the nations reeling under the self-imposed burdens of their armaments. Yet in the face of that statement Ministers sent to the Hague Conference instructions which did more than anything else could have done to prevent that which we so much desired. I do not think the hon. Member who moved this Amendment treated the despatch quite fairly when he represented the whole case of the Government as consisting in the argument that if you do away with the commercial blockade you at once remove one incentive to expenditure on armaments. The last paragraph of the despatch reads—

> "At the present time they are unable to assent to a resolution which might, under existing conditions, so limit the prospective liability of war as to remove some of the considerations which now restrain public opinion from contemplating it, and might after the outbreak of war tend to prolong it."

Here we have a further contention. It is to be noted, however, that the first paragraph of the despatch flatly contradicts this, inasmuch as it expressly affirms that every limitation of the sphere of war tends to discourage all war; so that perhaps the somewhat incoherent character of the despatch justifies my hon. friend in arguing as he did. Behind the Ministers in this matter, I understand, are those mysterious and awful powers, the experts. Well, experts so far as I have been able to ascertain are persons who claim, by *status*, the right to make assertions without proving them. But the experts have no jurisdiction in a matter of this kind. It is not a matter of naval technique. It is a national question. We know that the various functions of the State re-act and inter-act upon each other, and as medical men assure us that a multitude of nervous disorders may be set up by the overstrain of the eye, so multitudes of evils may be set up by the overstrain of a particular function of the State. It is for that reason that we must set ourselves up to be our own experts on this occasion. The concluding paragraph of the despatch really amounts to this, that we insist upon retaining the right of capture of private property in time of war, because it is the only way in which we can do serious harm to the enemy with whom we are at war. Of what kind of war could the Government have been thinking when they wrote that paragraph? They could not have been thinking of our experience in the war in South Africa, or the Afghan war, and if they were thinking of a war with Russia, I do not see the force of the paragraph. The expenditure of the Indian Army is adjusted even now to the old fear that Russia will invade India. That fear still holds, even when Russia is oppressed and torn by internal discussions. Still if there is anything in that fear the Government could hardly argue that what we could do to the commerce of Russia if we were at war with her would be of any consideration whatever. In point of fact, when we consider such arguments we are forced to the conclusion that our vast Navy is to an indefinite extent a needless burden forced upon us by the fact that the Government refuses to give up in agreement with other nations the right of capture at sea. Naval experts argue on the one hand that we cannot be made to suffer at sea as we did in old times. In the old wars our commerce suffered very heavily indeed, but naval experts argue that that could not happen to-day; that no enemy that we could have, could have such facilities for taking prizes to port as would countervail the naval advantages that would accrue to us. But if that be true, if the enemy cannot injure us as they formerly could, on what grounds is our Navy still maintained? Looking at the matter in the light of mere lay common-sense, taking the modern conditions into consideration, we are led to the fact that this country, having the largest number of ports and the largest navy, could do more damage to the commerce of other nations than they could do to ours. If that be a reasonable inference, two things follow. First, that the enemy cannot do us much harm, and the argument that we need a huge navy to protect our commerce falls to the ground. But if it still holds good that we can greatly injure the enemy, then we have the clearest possible ground for foreign Powers refusing to decrease their armaments. I venture to say that on a survey of the whole Hague Conference we stand convicted of an impossible proposal. After all the assurances given us by His Majesty's Ministers, we send a representative to the Conference to ask the other Powers to take a great step towards disarmament, while we will not yield that particular claim, which is a far more serious thing than disarmament itself. The other Powers feel that their commerce will suffer enormously from our power of making prizes, and yet, while we maintain our claim, we affect sorrowful surprise at their refusal to check their preparations. All such Hague Conferences must be a failure until we reconsider our position in regard to capture at sea. Another argument of the experts about our commerce, is that our Navy exists not for the purpose of protecting it in time of war, but for defending us from invasion. If that be so, it is clear that the argument that we need a huge navy in order to defend our food supply is an imposture and should be abandoned. However, from any point of view, it cannot be disputed that we have a large number of vessels built for the express purpose of defending our commerce in time of war. The building of cruisers has always been excused on the score that they are needed for the defence of vessels bringing food supplies to this country in time of war. These cruisers have no excuse for their existence if you will fairly face the dilemma into which the Government are forced in this matter. If they will act upon the fair statement of the case by other naval Powers, they will agree to the abandonment of this somewhat barbarous exception. They are insisting on a course—to use the expression, which I strongly endorse, of the Prime Minister—which is one of the "methods of barbarism" in regard to naval warfare, when they have abandoned it in land warfare. I mean the existence of the right of capture of private commerce. If you are going to capture private commerce on the sea, why not plunder it on the land? I am not going to contend that in time of war you do not break the laws that are agreed upon, but that is part of the general argument against war. His Majesty's Ministers themselves admit, in their own despatch, that nothing tends so much as a step towards the limitation of war, to limit the possibilities of war altogether. As regards the concrete situation with the Powers of Europe, it is this. On the one hand we see Germany increasing her naval armaments; and we say that it is necessary that, for every keel that Germany lays down, we must lay down two. This assumes that the action of Germany is aggressive. I say that we have no right to assume that the action of Germany is aggressive until you abandon this position about the seizure of commerce in time of war. If His Majesty's Ministers only agree to that, then, if Germany continued to lay down other ships, you might say that their attitude was aggressive; but Germany has the right to do this in self defence so long as you maintain that barbarous claim, not justified in the eyes of the world and not justified in the eyes of that large and weighty section of the Government's supporters who care very strongly indeed about restraining all armaments and wasteful expenditure of all kinds. The despatch to which I have alluded finally suggests that His Majesty's Government would be ready to consider the matter, with other European Powers, if they showed any disposition to reduce their great armies. That is not a resonable proposition in the circumstances. The great armies of the European Powers surely exist, in the opinion of those Powers, for their protection against each other. You cannot rationally say that the armies of Russia, Germany and France are armies formed for any agression against this country. They are an expression of the jealousies of these nations towards each other. We have no right to go to them and say "You must abandon your jealousy of each other and reduce your great armies before you can expect us to give up the right of capture of commerce at sea." The despatch from first to last is unsatisfactory, and, as I have already suggested, incoherent. The sole result, the one outstanding result we have obtained from the Hague Conference is the proposed creation of an international prize court, which instead of being a matter of satisfaction, is rather a symbol of failure to get the reality. We asked for bread, and we have got a stone. In making this protest we have the approval of a very large section of those who wish to give loyal support to His Majesty's Ministers; and on an occasion such as this, when a proposal is put forward in a non-partisan sense by a representative of a small minority on the other side, I trust His Majesty's Ministers will recognise that in this matter their own supporters have a right to the explanation that will be necessary to meet the very serious character of the case.

Amendment proposed—

At the end of the Question, to add the words, "But we humbly express our regret that Your Majesty's Plenipotentiaries at the Hague Conference were not authorised to forward the reduction of international armaments by assenting to the principle of the immunity of enemy merchant vessels, other than carriers of contraband, in time of war."—(*Mr. Frederick Edwin Smith*).

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

*MR. BOWLES (Lambeth, Norwood) said the mover of the Amendment had told them that he submitted it in no party spirit, and that so far as he was concerned he did not intend to press it to a division. He had been very glad to hear that, because, although he was very grateful to his hon. friend for having raised this subject, which was of fundamental importance, he, for his part, was bound to say that he entirely disagreed with the position that he occupied upon this matter, and that so far from thinking that the action of the Government had been reprehensible, he, for one, took the view that the action of His Majesty's Government in resisting the pressure which he was sure had been brought to bear upon them, pressure of a very shrewd and intimate character which they must have felt difficulty in resisting, was, perhaps, the one action throughout the whole of their administration for which they really deserved the gratitude of their countrymen. He had listened with interest to the speech of his hon. friend, who had given great attention to this subject and was a great authority upon it. He understood that he had even written a book on international law; and it was, of course, a well-known maxim that anyone that had written a book on any subject was *ipso facto* an authority on that subject, irrespective of the contents of the book. But it seemed to him that some of the arguments which his hon. friend had used lacked that finish and precision which they always expected from him in that House. Indeed, he had come to the conclusion that like the hon. Member opposite, his hon. friend had not realised the full meaning and effect of his own Amendment. be the result of the adoption of the policy advocated by the Amendment. They were asked to express regret that His Majesty's Government had not shown a readiness to pledge this country without the consent of that House—for let them not forget that our plenipotentiaries at the Hague were empowered and instructed without reference to that House—to the principle of the immunity of private property from capture at sea; and there was a suggestion that, if the Government had expressed that readiness, in some way the cause of international disarmament would have been furthered. He confessed that he was not in the least sanguine about the prospects of that cause. But hon. Gentlemen opposite were sanguine about it; and there might be some among them who would be inclined to support this Amendment in the belief that, by so doing, they would be helping the cause of peace. To them he would point out that there was no question here of peace. This Amendment was concerned with war; and the question it raised was, war having broken out, and being in fact in existence, by what methods and on what principles should it be conducted? That and that alone was the question raised. For his part he wished to say quite clearly and at once that in his view the adoption of the principle advocated by his hon. friend would not only not avoid war, but its acceptance would really remove perhaps the greatest of all obstacles to war, would render war, not less likely, but far more likely, would render war not shorter but longer in duration, and above all would render war enormously less humane than it was under the present system. The object of war was not to kill men and to capture property; these were the means not the objects of war. The object of war was to reduce the Government of one's enemy to submission; and this was effected by subjecting it to the stress of material injury. The process was effectual only in proportion to the injury inflicted, and if there was no injury there was no effect. But if they were to consider, as they were now invited to consider, what injuries were to be allowed in war, and what forbidden, then, in the interests of neutrals, of humanity and of the world, those acts and injuries of war which produced the desired effect most quickly, most effectively and most mercifully were, surely, to be preferred. And, if that principle were accepted, there was no case for this Amendment. For, of all the injuries of which war consisted, capture of property upon the high seas was at once by far the most effective and the most humane. His hon. friend was very solicitous of the interests of private property. Why did he not extend his solicitude to private property upon land? Was private property upon sea more sacred in the eyes of the friends of the Amendment than private property on land? On land the injuries of war were effected by invading territory, capturing towns, occupying provinces, seizing and destroying private property wherever it was necessary, by preventing anybody, even neutrals, from carrying on any trade, even non-contraband, in the occupied territory, by appropriating taxes and by depriving the Government of all its resources in men, material and money in order to reduce it to submission. Private property at sea was to be immune, and we were to propose it. Had any land Power ever proposed that private property should be immune from capture on land? He had there proclamations which had been made by generals commanding armies not so very long ago, and which were of the most ferocious and merciless description. In 1870 a great American General had advised Prince Bismarck as to his true policy in the then forthcoming war. "The proper strategy," he said, "consists in the first place in inflicting as telling blows as possible upon the enemy's army, and then in causing the inhabitants so much suffering that they must long for peace, and force their Government to demand it. The people must be left nothing but their eyes to weep with over the war." Such was the tenderness with which private property was regarded by those whose power is on the land. And hon. Members would remember the famous phrase applied to the condition of the Shenandoah Valley after the armies had passed over it, across which, it was said, not even a crow could fly unless it carried its rations in its beak. It was, indeed, impossible to wage war upon land without violating private property. They could not march an army without traversing private fields, occupying private houses, requisitioning private forage and provisions, and no Government could wage war at all except by taking by force the private property of its own citizens in the shape of taxes. And after all even the life of a soldier was his private life. This distinction which was sought to be set up between private property and all other property of the nation, individually and collectively, could not really be maintained. On land private property was ruthlessly and inevitably trampled upon. Yet it had never been suggested that it should be immune; for the simple reason that were this to be conceded, war on land would be abolished altogether. But what was true of the land was equally true of the sea, and the adoption of his hon. friend's suggestion was really a suggestion that war on sea ought to be abolished altogether and that such war as was allowed to take place in future should take place not on the sea at all but upon land. Let them consider for a moment the contrast between war and the capture of private property at sea and on land. At sea there were no towns and no provinces, and there was no possible field for operations except the property and supplies of the enemy. That property was not the small store of the cottager or the little crops of miserable inhabitants. It was the property of individuals necessarily rich, and it was in charge of strong and robust men to whose existences it was not essential. Nevertheless, it was of the most valuable kind to the enemy, and in its most compact and convenient form. On land, whenever an army or invading force came up against private property, the whole black array of human passions was let loose. Any military commander might declare that it was necessary to take this or that and might thereupon take it without trial or investigation, without hearing any defence, and with all the incidents of horror well known to anyone who had made any study of war. But how enormous was the contrast at sea. The capture of private property at sea was absolutely destitute of all the horrors of bloodshed and carnage which distinguished it on land. No blood was shed, no bulk was broken, no property was destroyed. The seizure was made, the ship was brought in, and an impartial tribunal considered whether or not the case was good and whether the prize was a good prize. Compared with the operations of a land force, who would say that this was not humane, merciful, and yet effective in the highest degree? He wondered if hon. Gentlemen had considered the only two cases in which war had been entered into on the clear understanding that private property was not to be captured—the Crimean War and the Franco-Prussian War. Those wars had shown what his hon. friend had forgotten; namely, that war on land could be declined, because it must, sooner or later, take the form of invasion, and the invasion must be resisted. But, if private property was to be sacred war at sea could be declined. Any power conscious of naval inferiority need only sink her ships in the mouths of harbours or keep them in port under the guns of fortifications and out of reach of any naval force which the enemy could bring against them. There was no need, if private property was to be immune, to send out a fleet at all. Suppose we were at war with France or with Germany, or with any other great country. What would France have to do that would force her to send her fleet out? What was the object of cruising if there was nothing to protect? Why break blockades when all blockade was ineffective? Nothing remained between the two countries but a fleet action, and why should the inferior country risk a fleet action without any earthly advantage to fight for? The truth was that once the principle advocated by his hon. friend was agreed to the British fleet and all other fleets would indeed become what the seconder of the Amendment had frankly avowed he wished them to become a needless and a senseless burden. But his hon. friend said, "consider the advantages to us. This country is absolutely dependent upon an enormous and widespread commerce. Look what a splendid thing it would be if during war this country could be assured that the whole of its commerce was safe." It was perfectly true we should gain an absolute security for all our sea-borne trade. But, in the view of everyone who had seriously considered this matter the vast proportion of our seaborne trade was already secure. The fact that it was spread all over the oceans of the world, its immensity, and the fact that we had 1,000 miles of coastline which all the fleets in the world could not blockade, afforded ample security for the safety of all but an extremely small fraction of our oversea trade. What we should gain, therefore, would only be the security of that small and almost negligible fraction. But what would our enemy gain? He would gain every advantage that the most wily statesman representing any country could possibly desire. The enemy could not strike us seriously at sea, and he would give that up. We could strike him seriously at sea, and we should give that up. His sacrifice would be small and illusory; ours would be huge and vital. There could be no advantage to us in such a bargain. His hon. friend had said that things had changed because now there were a great many railways whereas formerly everything was carried by sea. He ventured to urge that the only real road for trade on this globe was the sea. All overland transport merely fed the sea. The proportion of the whole of the stuff that was moved about the surface of the earth by sea as compared with that moved by land was not decreasing, but increasing. The cost of freight by land was something like twelve or thirteen times as much as the cost of freight by sea. The railways in Egypt were worked by Welsh coal, which since it went to them by sea was bought by them cheaper than the same coal could be bought by the Brighton and South Coast Railway; and if it were true, as his hon. friend alleged, that the power we have at sea would merely force our enemy to divert his trade from the sea to the land, then that power was not only enormous, but it had a tremendous and humane effect in reducing the Government who set out on war to their submission. The strange distinction suggested by his hon. friend could not be maintained. His view was that, while the citizen was to give his taxes, and the soldier and sailor his life, the trader was to be a sort of privileged class, not only not sharing the burdens of war, but actually increasing his profits out of the national distress which he would be assisting at a profit to perpetuate and prolong. That was the real meaning of this suggestion. And those who, knowing as they must know, that war could only be effectual at sea or on land when it was directed against property, claimed that their country was to give up her power to capture from the enemy in order that they might be protected from capture by the enemy, who claimed to be personally at peace though nationally at war claimed in effect to be in their country but not of it. When a Government declared war, the whole country which it represented was at war, and every individual was bound to take his share and bear his burden. If the citizen gave his money, the soldier his life and the trader his goods, it was but that the money, the lives and the goods of their fellow-citizens should be secured to them, and no man could refuse that sacrifice without abjuring his citizenship. Of all the incidents of war, the capture of property at sea was at once the most effective and the most humane. If his hon. friend would bring in a Motion to abolish all war, well and good. But, till then, he hoped the House of Commons would never agree to a principle which would not only bind the right arm of this country behind her back in the hour of her great extremity, but which also by abolishing, as it would abolish, war upon the sea, would simply intensify, aggravate, perpetuate and prolong the far greater horrors of war upon the land.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): It will probably be for the convenience of the House that I should state as succinctly as I can what has been the view of those concerned mainly in expanding the instructions of the Hague delegates, already before the House, and now called in question by the mover and seconder. I will ask the House to bear in mind that this Motion first appeared on the Paper, not as a substantive Motion at all, but as an Amendment to another Motion of greater scope and of very great importance. It has suddenly become a substantive Motion, and it has come before the House as such at exceedingly short notice. This question of the immunity of private property from capture at sea has received very careful attention on the part of the Government, and specially on the part of those particular departments of the Government which are most concerned in it, which in this case are the Admiralty and the Board of Trade. But the attitude of the Government as a whole is, no doubt, expressed in the instructions to the delegates at The Hague, and I submit to the House that on a subject of this importance—which, I admit, is one of very great complexity—the House should not on a debate taken at such short notice come to any decision which would tend to reverse what has for so long been the traditional practice of this House.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE asked whether another opportunity would be given to consider the questions arising out of this particular branch of the subject with which they were connected, though not within the terms of the present Amendment.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I assume that there will be an opportunity—indeed more than one opportunity—on which this particular question can be raised.

First of all, let me say, shortly, that as regards the reduction of armaments, I do not for a moment believe that the attitude of the Government on the question of the immunity of private property from capture at sea has had the remotest effect on the prospect of the reduction of armaments before The Hague Conference. The House should bear in mind that long before the Conference met the anxiety of the Government and their desire in regard to the reduction of armaments being promoted was declared in the House, declared by the Prime Minister in the most explicit terms, declared by me also in a debate in the House in terms not less explicit; and anyone who either heard or read that speech cannot doubt the earnestness of the Government with regard to the question of the reduction of armaments. Our earnestness was stated before the question of the immunity of private property from capture at sea was raised at all. It is complained that we did not follow up this statement with the same vigour at The Hague Conference as that with which we had previously expressed our views in the House. But our views were known to other Powers, and we deliberately expressed them in this House beforehand in order that the feeling of the other Powers might be tested, and in order to know in advance to what extent it was possible to make progress at The Hague Conference. Because, in questions of this kind, it is much better that the invitation should in the first instance be addressed indirectly to other Powers, as it can be by a statement in this House. In that way you can find out how much other Powers are prepared to accept, and how far they will go. They do not thank you if, before you have taken any steps of this kind, and given an opportunity for the expression of opinion, you address an invitation to them which they might not be prepared to receive, and which is simply embarrassing. It became perfectly clear before the Conference met that the general consent of the Powers would not go beyond a certain very limited point in the limitation of armaments; and if we had pressed it further at the Conference we should have introduced an element of friction and discord which would have been the furthest possible from our desire. The hon. Member for Tyneside says that that is our fault, because of our attitude on this question of the immunity of private property from capture. His first point is that when we did address this invitation or express this hope, if we had at the same time only expressed ourselves willing to give up the right of capture at sea, we should have met with a much more favourable reception from other Powers than we did. The hon. Member for Tyneside is not in a position to speak on behalf of the other Powers. We made our views known long before the Conference and it was known that this question of immunity from capture would be raised. Why did not the other Powers raise the point then? We had no indication from any Power that on this question of capture turned the question of reduction of armaments, or that their disposition with regard to armaments would be in any way affected by it. If that was so, and if no other Power gave an indication that they regarded it as a material point in the reduction of armaments, then I think it is an assumption not fair to His Majesty's Government to put on them the responsibility for not getting a better response from the other Powers. Those who have read the instructions to the Hague delegates to the end—not merely the first two paragraphs—will realise that His Majesty's Government have left the door open to them or to their successors to reconsider this question, should there be a real indication on the part of the Powers generally that it is likely to become a material point in effecting such a reduction of armaments as would really tend to diminish the apprehension of war. But until a Conference does meet in which it is apparent from the declared opinions of other Powers that reduction of armaments may make such progress as that, till then we have to consider the situation as it is to-day; and it is on that ground alone that we can discuss it effectively this evening. The hon. Member for Liverpool has said that we should gain by a declaration, signed by ourselves and other Powers, that private property at sea is to be immune from capture; and the hon. Member for Tyneside said that, if that declaration were made, we should be able to reduce a considerable amount of our Navy which is now maintained for the purpose of protecting British commerce. British sea commerce, the British mercantile marine, is the great prize of the world. Would you really be prepared, even if the Hague Conference had come to a decision, and firmly as every other Power might be resolved to keep it—would you really be quite safe if you so decreased the British Navy in consequence of such an agreement that in case of war you would not have the means to protect your mercantile marine? The hon. Member for Liverpool said that the Declaration of Paris is analogous to a declaration of this kind, and that it has been observed. But there is this distinction between the two. The Declaration of Paris interests every neutral. If either of two belligerents violates the Declaration of Paris, he damages the interests of a neutral and makes the neutral take common cause against him. But the immunity of private property at sea would not affect neutrals, but the two belligerents only; and you cannot rely on a treaty which affects only belligerents being kept in time of war, with the same certainty that you can rely on rules the enforcement of which interests equally neutrals and belligerents. As to insurance, the hon. Member for Liverpool said the British firms are greatly interested in the insurance of foreign mercantile marine, and that if we were at war with a Great Power the British insurance interest in the mercantile marine of that Power would be equivalent to a half of the whole. The hon. Member gave the hypothetical instance of a bombardment of San Francisco by the British Fleet, and said that if we did that we should be destroying the property of our own insurance companies. There is no analogy between the two cases. Bombardment destroys property; but the question we are discussing is one of the capture of property. But let us assume that you are at war with a foreign Power, and that its merchant shipping has been captured by the British Fleet. That is not destroyed. The value of the property is there. If it is captured by your own Government how is your own insurance company to lose? [AN HON. MEMBER: Would they get it?) I assume that the British Government would see that British commercial interests did not suffer by the acts of their own Fleet.

MR. HARMOOD-BANNER (Liverpool, Everton): What of the "Knight Commander"?

SIR EDWARD GREY: That is a different case. We were neutral in that case. I hold that our case is an exceedingly strong one; but we were neutral. If we were a belligerent, from the mere fact of our being in possession of the property we should be in a position to dispose of it as we pleased. If we returned it, there would be no claim on the insurance company, and if we kept it we could recoup the insurance company as we pleased. As to the point of humanity raised by the hon. Member for Tyneside, I cannot see that humanity comes into this question of the capture of private property at sea.

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON: I spoke of "methods of barbarism." I was thinking of the ethics and not of the cruelty of the act.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I find it difficult in questions of war, to deal with ethics apart from humanity. Humanity does, to some extent, make its voice heard in time of war; and all nations more or less—some more and some less—admit certain rules in regard to war. But there is an old Latin proverb which says that even laws are silent during war, and the voice of ethics must be a very small voice indeed. I am quite willing, if the hon. Member desires it, to accept that as an instance of what a disagreeable and undesirable thing war is. I do not mean to urge that ethics should be put on one side. One of the great drawbacks to all war is that a great deal of that on which we set most store in the conduct of human life is set on one side. But I have always assumed, when I have heard the phrase "methods of barbarism" used, that it was used, not in an ethical sense, but from a point of view of humanity.

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON: It was used in the destruction of property.

SIR EDWARD GREY: During the Boer War, when that expression was used—and the Prime Minister will correct me if I am wrong—events were taking place in South Africa which had raised far more than ethical considerations. Certainly the phrase was accepted at the time as having been used in the interests of humanity, and the results which followed and the intention which was shown after that phrase had been used were directed to the interests of humanity. But when we come to the immunity of private property from capture at sea, surely it is humane—if you grant the assumption that by destroying property you can shorten the war and save life. The destruction of property or life, of course, is one of the lamentable consequences of war; but if you have to choose between the two, there is no doubt that, in the interests of humanity, the destruction of property is more humane than the destruction of life. As far as we are concerned in this country, our means of bringing a war to a conclusion rests entirely on our sea power. I do not believe that the analogy between the sea and the land is a complete one. The sea is the means of communication of our enemy; and if private property is to be immune from capture, it means this—that in time of war with a Great Power we must leave the means of communication of our enemy open and undisturbed. It means that out of his ports his trade is to go without let or hindrance, because the hon. Member for Tyneside admitted that the commercial blockade went with this question, and you could not separate one from the other. If you give up the blockade, as has been assumed in this debate, as well as assent to the immunity of private property from capture at sea, think what the situation would be when we went to war with a Great Power. Let us assume that the British Navy is superior to that of the other Power. The navy of the other Power retires into its ports under its own guns, out of reach of our navy. You can prevent it coming out, but you cannot blockade the enemy's port, you may not interfere with their merchant vessels when they come out to sea to trade. The whole trade of any great Continental country with which we are at war would proceed undisturbed the whole time, and I do not see how the war would ever come to an end. The hon. Member for Liverpool quoted a *dictum* of Lord Palmerston. He is not quite up-to-date. Lord Palmerston expressed a later opinion than that. He said in 1862 that if this country consented to the immunity of private property from capture at sea it would be guilty of an act of political suicide. I should not have brought any quotation into this debate as an authority on the present situation, but as Lord Palmerston has been quoted, I think it only fair we should have what was his later, as I believe, his more considered opinion. With regard to the great Continental armies and the bearing they have on this question, the hon. Member for Tyneside said that the motive for those great armies is mainly their rivalry with each other rather than any designs upon this country. I have no doubt that in the main that is true. But the great armies exist, and whatever the motives of creating them were, there is no limit to the use which might be made of them. They could be used no doubt under certain conditions as an offensive weapon against this country. I should like to read one passage from the instructions to The Hague delegates on that point. The hon. Member for Liverpool astonished me rather by reading the first two paragraphs of the instructions to The Hague delegates, which state the arguments from both sides, and having read those he omitted to give the conclusion and the justification for it contained in a further paragraph. It is this:—

> "The British Navy is the only offensive weapon which Great Britain has against Continental Powers. The latter have a double means of offence. They have their navies and they have their powerful armies. During recent years the proportion between the British Army and the great Continental Armies has come to be such that the British Army operating alone could not be regarded as a means of offence against the mainland of a great Continental Power. For her ability to bring pressure to bear upon her enemies in war Great Britain has therefore to rely on the Navy alone. His Majesty's Government cannot, therefore, authorize you to agree to any resolutions which would diminish the effective means which the Navy has for bringing pressure to bear upon our enemy."

That relates to the conduct of war, but it has its bearing also upon the probability of war. The mercantile marine of other countries is growing. The growth of that mercantile marine is every day becoming a greater guarantee for peace. As each foreign country developes its mercantile marine, that mercantile marine and the interests depending upon it become in that country a factor in its public opinion which makes for peace. But if you declare that private property is to be immune from capture at sea you very much weaken that factor for peace. What you do in effect is this. You give other countries to understand that as far as Great Britain is concerned, which has only the Navy as an offensive weapon, they will be able to make war if they please upon the principles of limited liability. There is much food for thought in that phrase. Limited liability encourages speculation. Speculation within due bounds is healthy for commerce and as long as it is healthy, that quality goes in commerce by the name of enterprise; when it passes these limits it is called speculation. Anyhow, that particular element which has to be encouraged by limited liability, whether you call it enterprise or speculation, has no doubt played a considerable part in developing trade; but I would not for worlds do anything which might encourage speculation in war. And if you are to come to a sudden resolution, when there is, as far as we know, no prospect that other nations are prepared to follow rapidly in the reduction of armaments, to deprive the British Navy of the power of bringing any pressure to bear on the mercantile marine of a foreign country, I am not sure that you may not be giving to some other great countries an incentive not to diminish but to increase their armaments. Certainly it is open to very serious question whether you will be diminishing the risks and the probability of war. The British Empire—this enormous Empire, with its small centre on which the whole defence of the Empire depends—is, as is constantly said, unique in the history of the world. It is a tremendous obligation; it might if we were weak become a tremendous temptation. If we were to put ourselves in this position of having only our Navy to rely upon as an offensive weapon and yet cutting ourselves off from any power of bringing pressure to bear through it, it would be possible for some Great Power to go to war with us with exceedingly little risk to themselves. Think what it means. Their navy is safe in its defended port. Our Navy is keeping the sea and preventing this navy coming out. Subject to that there is no disturbance whatever of international life. The whole trade of the hostile country goes on, its ships comes into our ports carrying on trade, no one interfering with them—we could not interfere with them—and we are entirely unable to interfere with its land trade, because our Army is too small a weapon to be used alone against a Continental Power. The risk is minimized to a degree which, in my opinion, might be dangerous. You will, perhaps, say, is it likely that any Power would wish to undertake even that minimized risk? At the present moment I believe we have the good will of the world, and I do not believe there is a single Great Power which entertains hostile designs against us, and it is, of course, the business of the Government of the day to do their best to maintain those friendly relations. I would not for a moment have it to be supposed that I think there is anything in the situation on the Continent at the present moment which makes me talk with any unusual apprehension of the risk or probability of war. I am discussing this purely from the academic point of view; but I do wish to make the point that, supposing the change were made, the risk in war with us would be exceedingly small to any great Euorpean Power. But what would the risk to us be? As long as our Navy could contain the navy of the other Power no doubt we should not suffer ourselves. But the war would go on for very long time.

AN HON. MEMBER: Only a state of war.

SIR EDWARD GREY: That would be much the same as war. That is to say, the other Power would remain in a position ready to take advantage of any slip. What would be the risk to us? We should not suffer so long as our Navy contained the navy of the other Power; but supposing other complications arose while the war was going on, supposing some great stroke of bad luck, some piece of ineptitude, any of those things to which human nature is liable, occurred, and supposing our Navy did lose command of the sea, what would be before us? Not only defeat, but conquest. Now I think a state of things under which, if you are at war with a great European Power, the war might be indefinitely prolonged at a mimimum of risk to the other Power, whilst in the event of something unforeseen or uufortunate happening, there would be on the horizon—if you like distant, remote, but still possible—this enormous risk to ourselves, would be a very serious situation. The whole subject was carefully considered in conjunction with the departments specially concerned before the instructions were sent to the Hague delegates. The hon. Member for Tyneside maintains that by changing our attitude on this question we could create such a situation that it would lead to a real reduction of armaments. We have had no indication from other Powers that it would be so. We must take the situation as we find it. Whatever may happen in the future, whatever changes in opinion the future consideration of this question may bring, the Government must at the present time and under the present conditions stand by the instructions it has issued to the Hague delegates; and we cannot at present, consistently with the safety of the country, take the risks which, in our opinion, might be involved in making the change which is pressed for by the hon. Member for Liverpool.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire E.): I rise to say that I am in hearty agreement with the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, and I will not even criticise the single sentence in it, which he was betrayed into by an interruption from an hon. Member below the Gangway, which otherwise would give rise to criticism on our part, and I leave the gloss which the latest commentator has put upon an unhappy phrase of the Prime Minister's without any comment. I do not wish to convert into a Party debate a serious discussion on a non-party subject, upon what we think is a very grave issue. I therefore hope the right hon. Gentleman will not think I am wanting in the courage of my opinions, when I decline to take up the challenge which I do not think he wanted to throw down. [Sir E. GREY was understood to assent.] There was only one passage in the right hon. Gentleman's speech which I noted with any anxiety. It was when he suggested that the Government, although they did not give any countenance to this proposal, none the less let it be open for future consideration. If that statement had stood alone I should have considered it ominous, but after listening to the subsequent arguments which the right hon. Gentleman advanced, I do not think we need be alarmed. I cannot conceive that this country will ever be willing to part with what has been its great traditional weapon in naval warfare. I do not see how, if we were to part with that weapon, we could have any influence to secure peace, how we could wage war if it broke out, or how we could terminate a state of war once it had arisen. My hon. and learned friend who brought forward the Amendment has disclaimed taking such action on humanitarian grounds, but has declared that his object is to forward the reduction of international armament. Does my hon. and learned friend really believe that the reduction of inter-national armament would be forwarded by the adoption of the proposal which he has embodied in his Amendment? The hon. Gentleman who seconded the Amendment endeavoured to establish the proposition that as one of the objects for which our Navy existed was the protection of our commerce, therefore if our commerce was guaranteed free from attack, we could do away with part of our Navy. I think the arguments of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs have disposed of that contention already, and although it is perfectly true that one of the objects for which the Navy exists is the protection of our commerce, yet the real object of its existence is the maintenance of our supremacy on the seas, and the mere fact that our commerce was protected in other ways would not enable us to do away with that supremacy or reduce our Navy, although it might lead to an alteration in the type of one or two of our vessels. But even my hon. and learned friend had to make an exception, and he has made an exception in the case of carriers of contraband. What does that mean? It means that there would be at once an enormous extension of contraband and contraband at the present time is one of the thorniest and most difficult questions of international law. Every nation has its own definition of contraband. We have ourselves protested against the definition of contraband given by every belligerent, and you cannot have a question more likely to embitter the relations of one belligerent with another or more likely to imperil the relations of belligerents with neutrals than one which deals with the definition of contraband and prevents one belligerent from dealing with the private property of the other except on the ground that it is contraband. If we once start this, I venture to say that an enormous extension of contraband would do away with much of the advantage which those who support the the proposal expect to obtain from it, and at the same time it would enormously complicate the issues of war and render our relations with neutrals much more difficult. As an effective naval weapon, the right to search for and seize contraband is not to be ranked with the right to capture, to bring into port, and to condemn the vessels of the enemy. The whole trend and development of the mercantile marine renders the right to search much less valuable than in the old days. The building of enormous vessels with thousands of tons of cargo has rendered the right to search practically nugatory, unless we can bring the vessels into port, break bulk, and turn out the cargo, a far too risky and expensive a proceeding. In my opinion the right to search for contraband and the right to capture contraband is but a weak way in comparison with that which we are asked to abandon. I do not propose to deal with the effect upon our enemies of the exercise by us of this power, but what my hon. and learned friend contended, taking various illustrations, was that we could practically do no injury to foreign powers by its exercise. I think that was sufficiently answered, at any rate to my mind, by the arguments which have fallen from the hon. member for Norwood, which are conclusive on that point. You would gradually establish by the adoption of this scheme of the Amendment a more favoured condition for private property and other commerce passing by sea than is now enjoyed by private property passing by land. There has been some discussion as to the way in which private property passing on land may be seized, but everybody knows that, apart from seizure, there is a vast destruction of property necessarily involved in war on land, which falls upon the inhabitants of the country. Everybody knows that the invading army will seize all means of communication and block the main routes. But while he can do that on land, the power on the other side, if it has a superior naval force, is prevented from using it. I do not think that this is a more humane way of proceeding than that which exists at present. But it is said that this weapon is somewhat of a boomerang and that if we seize vessels at sea we should probably fine our own insurance companies. The Secretary of State fully answered that. At all events, when war breaks out, the companies cannot, during the duration of it, make any payment to the enemy; whether they could make any payment at all when the property has been seized by us as an act of war, I am not lawyer enough to say, but the enemy will be out of his money while the war lasts, as we should not permit an English insurance company to make a payment to a foreign merchant vessel because the ship had been seized by the King's forces. But more than that, no such insurance could possibly take place after war had broken out. No such insurance would be likely to take place when relations were strained, and this argument, at its best, can only apply to so much of a foreign nation's merchantile marine as is habitually insured against war risks, year in and year out, when no war appears imminent. I have had occasion to hear a good deal of evidence on the subject of insurance of late, before a Treasury Committee of which I am the Chairman, and if I may judge by that evidence, I should say that the proportion of the mercantile marine of any nation, our own included, which is habitually insured against war risks in peace time is very small indeed. I think, therefore, my hon. friend has raised a bogey which need not frighten us, and I think he exaggerated the risks which we run at present. The same is true in regard to the general risks to the trade and commerce of this country from any attacks which foreign navies or foreign cruisers can make upon it, providing that we maintain our supremacy at sea. If our supremacy at sea is once in doubt, however, the whole of our mercantile marine may go; but provided we maintain that supremacy, though it is perfectly true that you cannot guarantee every ship, or safeguard every cargo, I do not believe that the risk is very great. I believe, differing from the hon. Member for the Tyneside Division, that the experience of the great French War showed that in the long run the risk to our commerce is very small and perhaps during the time of the war rather fell than rose; but you may have individual captures to a considerable amount and heavy losses; yet the proportion which they bear to the whole of our sea-borne commerce will be so small that the disturbance of our trade and industry will not be anything like what is anticipated, and the mere protection of a vessel at sea, even though it may belong to a belligrent will not do away with all those causes which tend to bring about industrial crises in the time of war. Under these circumstances and holding these views very strongly, as I said at the beginning of my speech, I only rose to express the pleasure with which I listened to the right hon. Gentleman and to express my earnest hope that he and the Government will maintain upon this question the attitude to which he has given expression to-night and which I believe to be essential to our national security on the grounds he has mentioned, and essential to the maintenance by us of that power which is necessary for the purposes of war with other great military nations, even if the operations take place at sea.

Colonel SEELY (Liverpool, Abercromby) said he joined with the right hon. Gentleman opposite in saying with what pleasure he listened to the speech of his right hon. friend, but unlike him he was not convinced. He knew that those who agreed with the hon. Member for the Walton Division of Liverpool were a small minority, but he was not in the least convinced that they were not right that on the score of national peace, and still more of national safety, it would be wise to adopt the suggestion made in the Amendment and exempt enemies' ships from capture in time of war. The hon. Member for Norwood had said that they could not make war less likely by making it less horrible. It was said that the great thing in war was to make the damage done as great as possible, but that cut at the root of the whole of the argument upon which the Geneva Convention was based. If that argument were to prevail no one would ever enter into a Geneva Convention or assent to the proposals made at The Hague Conference to mitigate the damage done and the horrors caused by war, especially to neutrals and non-combatants. What he submitted was that this was an argument which would not hold water. We had gone past the day when it could be said "we will make war as horrible as possible and we shall make it less likely."

Mr. BOWLES said he understood that the hon. Member imputed that he had advocated the retention of the present system in order to make war more horrible, but his whole argument was that the acceptance of the hon. Member's Amendment would not diminish the horrors of war but make it more horrible.

Colonel SEELY did not think the hon. Member for Norwood was right in his suggestion that the present system made war more humane because it made it swifter. In the time of the French War we had this right of capture, but that war, with one short interval, went on for twenty years. Again, the Civil War in America, in which considerable property was destroyed, was not swifter on that account. It went on for five years. He believed that all such efforts to bring war to an end were futile and foredoomed to failure; by these attempts to destroy property, or to hurt or kill non-combatants, war would not be shortened, but would tend to be prolonged. This question was raised in the last war. It was said that the war would be shortened if it were made horrible. On that occasion all the officers engaged were of opinion that that would prolong it, and that all farm-burning and general devastation was a crass error. Another theory put forward was that the men who were fighting on land could both loot and fight at the same time. He was much interested in the argument of the hon. Member for Norwood, that the object of damaging was to make war more unlikely. There was a great soldier—he believed the greatest England ever had—who had said, "My troops will either loot or fight, but will not do both." The same spirit was to be found in a stronger degree in the Navy. Our Fleet depended not so much on the number of our ships as on the men who manned them; and once the idea was instilled into their minds that nothing was to be gained by war but sacrifice on their part for their country that spirit would be greatly increased. His hon. friend had spoken of a hypothetical case of this country being at war with Germany or France, and had said that what would then happen would be that the enemy's fleet being bottled up in their ports they were not likely to escape. Was such a thing likely to happen? It had been disproved again and again. No fleet could be wholly bottled up, though some ships would be. All slow ships and sailing ships could be eliminated from the calculation, so that the House only had to see what was the position of the fast steam ships. We owned about three-fourths of the fast, or the moderately fast, steam ships in the world. That meant that in an engagement we might have a two-Power standard against our adversary, but we had six or seven ships liable to capture against their one. Therefore the country which had most to lose, and had not so great a chance of defending its own, was ourselves. Supposing it was a land war and not sea war, and supposing we were fighting in a country in which there were five houses, four of which belonged to us and one to the other side, and it became a question of whether they should be destroyed, the hon. Member would at once agree that it would be the height of folly not to join in an agreement to prevent their destruction. If that was so on land, did not the same argument apply to the sea? If that were true of the arithmetical calculation, what about the goods in the ships which did not come into the enemy's ports? We could not effectively blockade the ports of a possible enemy without enforcing war on two of his small neighbours, because a great many of the sea-borne goods which passed through to our possible enemy went by way of the land frontiers of neutral countries. Beyond this there was the fact that these countries had large land frontiers which we had not. Our frontiers were all sea and were all exposed to the enemy's ships, so that however the question of capture was regarded the arguments in favour of preventing capture were overwhelming. But, said the hon. Gentleman, the mercantile marine was the greatest prize in the world and he asked how could the enemy be trusted to respect that marine. He (Colonel Seely) did not for a moment say that we could greatly reduce the Navy, but he could say that when the enemy desired to attack our marine in such circumstances he would immediately become the enemy of the whole world unless, indeed, the whole world was combined against us. Believing as he did that our sailors would either loot or fight but would not do both, and believing that they should be asked to fight only and that in that lay the safety of this country he asked the House to support this Amendment.

*MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis) said the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had covered the ground so completely in the lucid and admirable statement he had made upon the subject that he did not propose to traverse it again. What he wished to do was to rebut what he believed to be the foolish arguments that had been adduced by various speakers in the course of the debate. The hon. and gallant Member for the Abercromby Division of Liverpool drew, he thought, a false parallel between the right to capture private property at sea and the Geneva Convention, but he could not see the force of the parallel, for the Geneva Convention did not in the least degree impair the power of a belligerent to bring a war to a successful and speedy conclusion, whereas if we deprived ourselves of the right of capture we should undoubtedly deprive ourselves of the greatest possible resource we had for bringing war to an end. The hon. and gallant Member had said that if we were fighting in a land where we had five houses and the enemy one it would be an advantage to us if there was an agreement to exempt those houses from destruction; but if the enemy was unable to get at our houses and we could get at his we should sacrifice a great deal by such an agreement. With regard to the admirable argument of the hon. Member for Norwood, he would point out that if the enemy's fleet chose to remain in their harbours our own fleet would, whilst awaiting them, be subjected to attacks from their floating mines and torpedo craft and we might lose one third of our fleet by that means, as the Japanese did; and under such circumstances it was quite possible for the weaker naval power to get the command of the sea against us. But he submitted that this would be the very worst possible time to approach foreign powers upon the question of exempting private property, for the reason that we had never been so badly off for cruisers suitable for the attack or defence of commerce for many years past. We had thirty-nine building in 1904, we had none now. The Germans had no less than nineteen unarmoured cruisers, built and building, of over twenty-two knots, and ten of them were over twenty-four knots. We had only six unarmoured cruisers of over twenty-two knots, and all of them were of less than twenty-three knots speed. By attacking commerce the Germans could, as an operation of war, force us to break up the concentration of our large armoured ships, as in the absence of other suitable fast small vessels we should have to send our big cruisers to chase their small commerce destroyers. He had the German view on this subject contained in an article, which, among others, from a symposium of representatives of different nations, he himself being one of the contributors, appeared in the "North American Review" in August of 1905. The article was by Captain Von Usler, and the following was the passage which he desired to quote:—

> "The right to take prizes is the most effective, and often the only possible instrument of war, when the opponent, after the destruction or investment of his forces, does not consent to make peace. To permit the exercise of this right only in the case of a blockade, would be to concede special advantages to the stronger maritime Power and to the state with an extensive coast-line."

That showed pretty clearly the German point of view. The position under this amendment would be very inconsistent. Under contraband of war we should be able to seize timber that might be used for railways because railways can transport troops, but we should not be allowed to seize merchant ships which might later on be used for the transport of German troops to all parts of the British Empire, either as raids or invasions. That seemed a very inconsistent and very absurd state of affairs.

MR. LEVERTON HARRIS (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) said that such ships would be belligerents at once.

*MR. BELLAIRS said he understood that the proposition was that merchant ships only became belligerent when transporting troops, and they could not be belligerent when not transporting troops under this Amendment. The hon. Member for Tyneside had spoken of the little influence which such operations against private commerce possessed in war. He would say that the whole of the operations of the French armies and Napoleon's downfall were brought about through the seizure of private property by Great Britian. He would by go even further and say that if we had seized in 1794 the great convoy from America which rescued France from famine we could have brought the war to an end in that year. He also took note of the fact that it was this convoy's being liable to seizure by the English which induced the French Directory to send out their fleet under Admiral Villaret-Joyeuse, with whom Howe fought the battle of 1794. Nothing brought the French fleet out except the paramount necessity of rescuing the convoy which was liable to seizure by the English Fleet. He felt that if the convoy had been seized the war would have been over.

MR. F. E. SMITH said these provisions for the enemy would be clearly contraband of war if destined for an invested region, and therefore liable to seizure.

*MR. BELLAIRS said he understood that the food supply was to rescue the nation from famine. It was for the supply of the whole nation and not for the army. While the hon. Member for Tyneside spoke of the opinions of experts as being too precise, the hon. Member the mover of the Amendment was, on the other hand, a little too much impressed by the force of law. If the hon. and learned Gentleman spoke on the side of the lawyers, the hon. Member for Tyneside, who on these matters was an expert in humanitarian principles, might be supposed to be on the side of the angels, and a combination of lawyers and angels was a very strong one indeed. Although the hon. Member for Tyneside might be on the side of the angels, it did not make him any more accurate in his assertions. The hon. Member showed what terrible risk our commerce ran in previous wars, but he denied that statement altogether. The only time when our commerce was without naval defence was in the Mediterranean in 1796 and then it ceased altogether in those waters. For the purpose of his work as lecturer to the senior officers of the Naval War Course he had worked out the figures of the loss of vessels during the whole period of the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars, and the loss was only 2·36 of the whole of our shipping, so that the risks of war were less than the risks of navigation. He would concede this point, however, that he did not think England would put in force her power to attack commerce until she had so far won the war as to be able to blockade the enemy but under no conceivable circumstances could he imagine the Government yielding the power to blockade the enemy. He would go further than that, and say that if we were at war with Germany and we found the commerce of Germany was being put through the ports of Holland and Belgium, we should at once order them to pass a non-intercourse Act or we would blockade their ports as well. For self-preservation we should have to do it, and the English people would demand that we should do it. To show the immunity which adequate naval defence gave to commerce he mentioned that the Japanese, within a thousand miles of Port Arthur, were transporting their troops in merchant vessels, in single ships, or in two or three ships, while the Russians were completely bottled up. The loss which the Japanese sustained was less than the ordinary risks of navigation. The hon. Member for Tyneside had said that the only reason for building cruisers was the defence of our commerce, but that showed the sort of assertions which were made in regard to this matter. Cruisers were necessary to the Fleet; they were the scouts; and the Fleet without scouts would be like a blind man without a dog. He thought the argument of the seconder of the Amendment about the increased cost of the Navy through the building of cruisers for the defence of commerce fell to the ground. The number of cruisers possessed by the Navy was mainly decided by the number of cruisers possessed by our opponents, and he did not see that anything could be saved in the way of cruisers through the exemptions of private property from capture at sea. The remark was made by the seconder of the Amendment that blockading would not bring a war to an end. But he thought it would stand a very good chance. At any rate, while we were in a position to impose a mercantile blockade on an enemy, undoubtedly our own commerce and industries went on safely, and workmen did not in any way starve, but went on, as in peace time, with their avocations. All that time the enemy suffered, and the conditions were so favourable to one side and unfavourable to the other that we could last out, and "he that endureth to the end shall be saved." He did not for one moment believe that the result of the discussions at The Hague Conference was in the slightest degree influenced by His Majesty's Government's refusing the exemption of private property from seizure at sea. He believed that where there was a failure at The Hague Conference—if there were a failure, though he was not prepared to admit that the Government could have done more—it was due to the humanitarian and sentimental side insisting on the Government's making the main plank of their platform the reduction of armaments. The waste of time and loss of prestige involved, and the absolute want of success of that proposal, he thought were responsible for any failure to achieve more at The Hague Conference.

MR. LEVERTON HARRIS said if he had little knowledge of international law, he had some experience of shipping affairs, and that must be his reason for venturing to trespass upon the time of the House. The Secretary for Foreign Affairs had certainly made a very novel and startling proposition when he said that belligerent vessels which were insured here and which happened to be captured by our Fleet would receive, so far as the underwriters were concerned, the consideration and protection of the Government. That proposition opened up a very wide area into which he did not intend to enter; but surely the right hon. Gentleman could not have been serious in saying this, because the effect would be to give to the underwriters of belligerent vessels greater advantage than the underwriters on our side would enjoy. The situation would be a very strange one if foreign vessels could be insured at lower rates than British vessels in our own country. The question was how far the freedom of belligerent tonnage from capture at sea affected the industrial population of this country. the advantages of warfare after all were only comparative. Practically the whole of the raw material which we used in our three staple industries, viz.: cotton, wool and iron, had to be imported from abroad. Those three great industries and those employed in them had to depend for their employment upon being able to compete with foreign nations in the production of finished articles in which that raw material were used. If they raised the cost of raw cotton by 20 per cent. or added 30 per cent. or 40 per cent. to the cost of wool or doubled the price of iron ore—and it could be proved that the ordinary rates of war risk premium would raise them quite to that extent—if they prevented the manufacturers of this country from competing with the manufacturers producing similar articles in foreign countries what would be the result? They would throw out of employment hundreds of thousands, he might say millions of hands, who were employed in this country, simply by reason of the fact that they were unable to obtain raw material at a sufficiently low price to enable them to make those particular manufactured articles in competition with their great industrial rivals. That was a state of affairs which would be brought about by any change in the situation which British shipping enjoyed at the present moment in time of war. It should not be overlooked that our vessels would have to bear as belligerent vessels the heavy burden of war risk insurance. It was quite true that our opponents would have to bear the same burden, but whilst the two countries might be crippled, in the case of this country they would have to meet the severe competition of every neutral manufacturing country in the world. They were told that they had really nothing to fear from the price of raw material being raised or by bringing about a scarcity of food or food at very high prices, because this country could command the services of neutral vessels which would not be liable to the high rates of marine insurance. That was perfectly true, but there was a fallacy in that argument, viz., that the neutral shipowner would do his utmost to obtain the highest possible freight he could get, and the consequence would be that the neutral shipowner would only accept cargo at a price very closely approximating to the price which British shipowners would be willing to pay. So that while the material gain to the importer of raw material would be apparent there would be a violent tendency to shift the whole of the shipping trade out of the custody of British shipowners into the hands of neutral shipowners, and in that fact alone lay one of the greatest dangers they had to face. Again they were told by other critics that they had really no great cause for alarm, that they did not need to fear that the price of raw material was going to be raised or that they were going to have a starving population clamouring for food and employment, because this country had a sufficiently powerful Navy to protect our shipping. Anyone who had carefully studied the naval manœuvres of 1906 which were directed to elucidating the question of commercial supremacy at sea, and anyone who had studied the report of the Food Commission, must have been struck by the very inadequate protection predicted in that report and what from the result of those manœuvres they might expect to happen to our shipping in time of war. They could not look to the Navy for much protection to British shipping in time of war. His hon. friend had read a quotation from a memorandum of the Food Supply Commission in which it was admitted that in a state of warfare it might prejudice the course of warlike operations to have to detach vessels to take care of our commerce and oversea trade. Under those circumstances, seeing that this country had so much more to lose and was more dependent upon sea trade, and bearing in mind that the whole of our raw material—our cotton and the raw material of other staple trades—and four-fifths of our food supply had to be imported, he ventured to think that if the present custom were amended and belligerent vessels were made immune from capture this country would be the greatest gainer, and it would be our adversaries who would suffer. We should also protect ourselves from those very great liabilities which might arise from unemployment and shortage of food, and be able at the same time to carry on a war with far greater feelings of security than under the present dispensation.

*MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs) said the hon. Member for King's Lynn had described this Amendment as having been moved by a lawyer and seconded by an angel. There was another comparison with the word angel which the hon. Member had not ventured to make. He thought the action of the mover of the Amendment was at any rate full of craft and subtlety, and he must have been astonished to find himself in company with the hon. Member for Tyneside. Perhaps the hon. Member for Liverpool thought it was good Parliamentary tactics to drive a wedge between Members on the Liberal Benches who might not be wholly of one mind. It was an amazing thing that a Motion like this, the object of which was to cause this country to throw aside the greatest weapon it possessed for its own defence and to abandon a position which other nations were striving with all their might to attain, could be seriously moved. It could not be denied that such a proposal as had been made, if it had been carried by the Hague Conference, would have compelled this nation to fight with one of its hands tied behind its back. The hon. Member for Norwood had said that the omission, and he hoped the refusal of the Government, to put forward any such proposal or support it, was the one act they had done since they came into office for which they deserved well. In his opinion if that had been their only act, they would have deserved well, but he did not agree that it was their only act. They had refused to accept any such proposal, although considerable pressure was put upon them, for they knew had they done so, this country would have suffered and their rivals would have profited. In all national conventions of this sort the object generally was that we should submit to conditions by which this country was prejudiced, and other nations would profit. This was conspicuously so in regard to any limitations of our action at sea. Whatever might have been the object of the hon. Member who moved the Amendment, the object of the hon. Member for Tyneside was crystal clear as day, because he wished to reduce the Navy to comparatively small dimensions. If the Navy was largely reduced he ventured to say that our trade would be reduced, and then he did not know where the money was to come from, not only for old-age pensions but for their daily bread. He could not see that any advantage could result from such a proposal as that which had been brought forward. The various combinations of interests which had come together in support of this Amendment made him rather inclined to suspect that there was something behind it which was not contained in the speech of the mover.

MR. F. E. SMITH: No, no.

*MR. REES said it could not be denied that that was sometimes the case, but supposing an agreement like this had been brought forward at the Hague Convention, supposing it had been pressed by the British representatives and had been accepted by the other nations. Was it supposed that if this country was engaged in war we should carry out such a stipulation? When nations were at war everything that impeded bringing the war to a successful conclusion would be and should be disregarded. Even when nations were not at war they tried to abrogate treaties and agreements as soon as ever they could, and if that was not so he confessed that he very indifferently understood what had been going on amongst the nations of the world. What advantage would it be to the world and the cause of peace if this country descended from its great position of pride and preeminence? At present their Navy was the greatest power they could exercise in the interests of peace; but supposing they descended from that powerful position, and their power went into the hands of some more aggressive nation who would not use it so wisely as this country had done in the past! He did not know upon what ground it was supposed that the British nation was to be able to keep the best of everything without being able to defend it, and fight for it. On what earthly grounds was it to be supposed this country could maintain its ground, if they accepted such a proposal as that which had been put forward? No, they could not afford to dispense with their power of defence which other nations found absolutely necessary to maintain. The hon. Member for the Abercromby Division had advanced several most debatable propositions, and then by way of making it clear that he was right, he said that ninety-nine men out of every hundred would agree with him. Most of them would like to think that that was the case in regard to any remarks they made. The hon. Member stated that they ought not to exasperate the enemy, and he also stated that it was impossible to fight and loot. Nothing more absurd could be suggested. In war the object was to exasperate the enemy, and that the usual thing to do was to fight first and loot afterwards. He could not agree with the hon. Member for Abercromby's argument in regard to our impotence for maintaining a blockade. It was said that this country had no land frontier to defend, but he would like to remind the House that they had frontiers extending over a distance of nearly 20,000 miles in three continents. It had been said that our mercantile marine could be protected better by diplomacy, and one hon. Member had written a book in which he stated that our rights could be satisfactorily defended by treaties. Whatever could have been the original intention of this Amendment, there was no doubt that it had eventuated in the debate upon the reduction of armaments. The discussion, however, had served this good purpose—it had swept the technicalities away from the Motion and left the chief issue clear. This country was in a great position of power and pre-eminence and had command of the sea at present, and acceptance of this proposal would lead to our losing that great position and it would mean a diminution of our power and preeminence in the world.

* MR. LUPTON (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) said he regarded this question as one of the most important the House could possibly deal with. It concerned the fate of nations, the position of our nation, the strength of our armaments and the management of them. It had been said by the hon. Member for King's Lynn that the Germans had a number of very swift battleships which would be able to prey upon our trade. How that supported the view that our trade should be left open to attack he did not know. He would have thought it was a very powerful argument for rendering our mercantile vessels immune from attack. The only doubt he had in his mind was whether the nations of the world would agree to make the merchandise of the sea immune from attack. The hon. Member for the Abercromby Division had shown that five out of six of the fast steamers were ours, and if they were safe from attack then war might go on with very little damage to us. The Foreign Secretary had put forward another view of the question, which he thought somewhat inconclusive. The right hon. Gentleman imagined that if war broke out between us and a Continental Power, with our great superiority in battleships we could drive the enemy's vessels into port and blockade them while the trade of that nation went on unimpeded; that by that means we should not destroy the enemy's power, but that it would be quite happy even though there was a state of war; that if that state of things went on for a long time there might be some great ineptitude on the part of the British Government, that our Navy would gradually be destroyed, and as a result of the enemy noing nothing we would soon find ourselves in a minority as to sea power, and be at the mercy of foreign Powers. He suggested that what would happen would be this. Our Navy having driven the enemy's navy under shelter of her ports, our trade going on without interruption, we should proceed to make a large army of two millions, make artillery superior to any other nation, because we had the best works in the world, and additional ships

and after some years construct an overwhelming force, and instead of being in a worse position we should be in a much better one. The only possible danger was in case the war came to a sudden conclusion an enemy having an army five times as large as ours might get past our fleet and on to our shores. That was the only contingency they had to fear, but something else would probably happen. The war having begun and the enemy's fleet being driven under the shelter of its fortress guns, having been face to face for three or four months with our fleet without doing any particular harm, it might happen that the feelings of anger which prompted the war would subside and that feelings of common sense might arise and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and the business men in both states would say to themselves, "This is rather silly; we are not conquering; it is true we are not suffering very much, but would it not be much more sensible if we made peace?" If instead of that both nations had been destroying commerce and raising fears and the most angry passions by inflicting serious damage, starving each other, and partially ruining their merchants and shopkeepers—such a feeling would not tend towards peace but towards exasperation. Let the House observe what took place during the American War. There the Northern States had mastery of the sea, and they were able to blockade all the ports of the Confederacy. Some cruisers slipped out unobserved and they were able to sweep the commerce off the northern sea. One great complaint the Americans had against this country was that nearly all the ships carrying their goods were flying the British flag. With all their superior naval force in the war he had referred to, the right to capture private merchandise at sea did not have the effect of terminating the war. If the Northern States had not destroyed the trade of the Confederacy, the feelings between the North and South might not have been exasperated, and it was highly probable the war might have been concluded in a much more satisfactory manner. It was admitted, he thought, by everybody that the attempt to bring the war in South Africa to a close by destroying farms only lengthened the war by eighteen months. The Boers for a long time were anxious for peace, and they would have accepted almost any terms, but when the barbarous policy of destroying their homes was resorted to they were prepared to die in defence of them. The speech of the hon. Member for Norwood was a carefully reasoned piece of logic, and it was most interesting to listen to. If an acute reasoner came to a wrong conclusion it meant that he started with a wrong premise. The hon. Member started with the premise that the object of war was to bring the enemy to submission, and his second premise was that the way to bring the enemy to submission was to harass, impoverish, and ruin them. The hon. Member argued that we must not take away from ourselves any means of harassing, impoverishing, and ruining the enemy. As to the first premise, he fully admitted that the object generally put forward by those who declared war was that they desired to bring the enemy to submission. But what was the real object? It was not that which was put forward. The real object of almost every war was to have a fight. The desire to have a fight was in human nature. It was so in every election and in all the Party debates in this House. That strong desire to have a contest was one of the factors to be considered. It would be a very long time indeed, before this strong human passion—the second strongest, if not the strongest—would be put an end to by the more reasonable portion of the human race. He did not think that people who went to war very carefully considered *pros* and *cons*. They said in regard to the enemy: "He has insulted us, and now we will kill him or die." That was no reason why in time of peace when their intellectual qualities were governing their lives they should not make rules which would help in the hours of passion to reduce the damage they might do to each other. There was no reason why war should be conducted by methods of barbarism. He would say that under certain limitations a war might be a very interesting spectacle, but in order that it might be so it must be conducted according to the rules of chivalry. If they were to have wars, let them be conducted in a chivalrous fashion, and let them avoid the infliction of needless misery on women, children, and non-combatants. In the days of the Wars of the Roses, owing in a great measure to the action of the heads of the Church, barbarous methods of conducting war were put an end to. The knights on both sides had a chivalrous feeling towards the peasanty, and they did not interfere with husbandmen. After their contests they went home—or those that were left. That kind of war was much less likely to do harm, to excite revenge, or to encourage the fighting spirit than the cruel war which involved the destruction of the enemy by any and every means, and turned the fighting quality into a quality of pure devilry. If they were to make any advance at all in the qualities of the human race they must try to subdue their natural devilment, their natural cruelty, and their natural desire to win at any price. The idea that a war could be finished sooner by making it horrible was an entirely mistaken one. He thought that all history showed that that was not the way in which to finish a war. Was the British Empire to be maintained by saying to other people, "Now we choose to make war, and we will pursue that war with the sole object of destroying our opponents by any means whatsoever"? To do so would be to lower the dignity of the human race. He thought they ought to order their lives in time of war with due regard to the religion they professed. He thought it would be an advantage to the nation if they could get the Government to accept the principle put forward by the mover of the Amendment.

MR. F. E. SMITH asked leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question again proposed.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): I rise to move the Amendment standing in my name: "But humbly represents to Your Majesty that this House regrets that Your Majesty's Government has not taken advantage of its opportunities to safeguard the interests of retrenched civil servants of the Transvaal administration and secure for them due compensation and pension." This is not the first time that this question has been raised in the House, and I sincerely and honestly hope that it is the last. [Cries of "Hear, hear!"] Yes, but I hope that because I trust that the Under-Secretary for the Colonies will be able to give such an answer to my appeal and the appeal of those associated with me that no further effort in this House will be necessary to secure justice to the retrenched civil servants of the Transvaal. It is remarkable that those who were unfortunately deprived of their posts in the Transvaal took up so dignified a position. In that they have preserved the best traditions of the Civil Service of Great Britain. A good many of them believe that they have been badly used and inadequately compensated, and that in not being granted a pension the great traditions of this country and Empire in regard to Civil Service have been very seriously invaded. Although upwards of 400 administrative civil servants in the Transvaal have been retrenched, and between 3,000 and 4,000 railway servants and constabulary, I think it is remarkable that in the newspaper Press there have been so few complaints, and such complaints as have been made have shown extraordinary forbearance. I do not think that this House and the country who are responsible for these civil servants can afford that they should continue appealing in vain for justice. When this question was first brought forward the appeal was made from both sides of the House, and I do not think that a single Member desires that retrenched civil servants in the Transvaal or any other Colony should not receive their due rights. Before the Constitution was given to the Transvaal we appealed that the Government should make it a condition that the interests of the civil servants should be protected and shepherded. The Under-Secretary for the Colonies made a sympathetic reply, as did Lord Elgin in another place; and we were led to believe, not by direct statement but by implication, that the interests of these civil servants would be duly protected. I think that the Under-Secretary will agree with me that they have not been protected. Whether that is the fault of this Government or of the Transvaal Government is a matter that is open to debate; but I venture to say that this Government had it in its power to secure for the civil servants of the Transvaal compensation and pension which would be adequate and proper. That was before the Constitution was granted. But another opportunity occurred when the £5,000,000 loan was guaranteed by this House and the Government. What was the result of their inaction and hesitation to protect the interests of these civil servants? In no case has an arrangement been made by which they have received what has been granted in any other Colony on whom self-government was conferred. The civil servants of the country deserve the warmest and strongest support that can be given them by the people and the members of the administration. The reputations of many Members of this House have been made by these efficient, expert men, whose knowledge, information, integrity and sound judgment have protected and shepherded Ministers from mistakes. Though unknown to or forgotten by the public, their services should never be forgotten by those to whom they have given faithful service and whose administrative success they have helped to secure. I suppose that no civil servants ever worked under such trying conditions as the Transvaal civil servants. Some hon. Members in the House know something of the difficulty attending the first efforts at reconstruction of the Government of the Transvaal and its commerce, industry, finance, education and land settlement which had been overturned by the war. These men's business habits, industry, and indomitable will were acknowledged by Lord Milner when he set himself to work to build up again a successful administration in the Transvaal. The result is that with one exception the administration of the Transvaal can be pronounced a complete success, although they were unfortunate enough not to have the support and co-operation of their Boer fellow-subjects who withheld themselves from all participation in the government of the colony until full responsible government was given to it. Under such extraordinary difficulties these civil servants succeeded in an extraordinary fashion; but all that they have received in most cases when their services were dispensed with has been a month's salary for every year of service. No pension has been granted, although most of the men took their families to the Transvaal and founded a home on the distinct understanding that it was a permanent engagement with a pension at the end of their period of service. I have received a letter from a man in the Transvaal who says that his retrenchment bears extraordinarily hard upon him, for all the compensation he received for his means of subsistence being cut off from him and the loss he had sustained by the disposal of his property was £125. Cases have come before me of letters written to some of these civil servants from the Colonial Office, to the effect that their employment would be permanent and pensionable—for instance, in the case of officers engaged in Australia and Canada. The Australian and Canadian Governments were asked to engage men for these posts, they were employed and they were told that their occupations would be both permanent and pensionable.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): I must interrupt the hon. Gentleman and ask by whom the letters were written. He was quoting a particular case of a Transvaal Constabulary man who had been retrenched. I ask the question because it is most important that the Government should maintain and carry out all the pledges it has given.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: Does the right hon. Gentleman ask me to give the name of the officer? In this particular instance which I was quoting I do not know who wrote, but I have in my mind several others. I have a case here in which there is a letter from the Colonial Office using these words: "The salary of the appointment is" so-and-so "and it is permanent and pensionable." That letter I saw.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The hon. Gentleman must attach the specific cases to a specific promise, but he quotes a hard case suppressing names and then he quotes a letter in regard to a case that is entirely distinct. I think he should state the cases in a definite way.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I think my position is quite clear. It is quite impossible for me to give names of correspondents. All I stated was that a letter of this kind has been received.

*MR. CHURCHILL: Who was it sent by?

SIR GILBERT PARKER: By an official of the Colonial Office. I am stating an incident known to me, and there are other incidents which are well known. It is impossible of course to state the names of men who at the present time are appealing for employment to the Colonial Office. I think it would predudice their case.

*MR. CHURCHILL: It cannot prejudice their case.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I am not entitled to use their names, but I am entitled to use an illustration and to say that the illustration which I quote is accurate and that the letter came from the Colonial Office.

*MR. CHURCHILL: I am very reluctant to interrupt, but if the hon. Gentleman can show a specific promise in writing, written from the Colonial Office in the name of the Secretary of State by a responsible official in regard to any particular person, so far from prejudicing that person it will probably secure the pension he desires.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I am glad to hear that, but there are cases at the present time of officers who were engaged in Canada or Australia and who were engaged on the definite understanding that their offices would be permanent and pensionable. The right hon. Gentleman will not dispute that the Constabulary were promised by the Government of the Transvaal official employment which was permanent and pensionable. I do not think the right hon. Gentleman will dispute that. I think the right hon. Gentleman if he will look further will find that a circular was issued stating that the employment would be permanent and pensionable, and that has never been disputed by the Government of the Transvaal. Indeed, Sir Arthur Lawley (late Lieutenant Governor of the Transvaal) speaking at Pretoria on 1st December, 1905, said—

> "You must treat the men who are in the service to-day fairly, justly and generously. Many of them came from other countries, after long and honourable records of public service. Others have ignored opportunities and have preferred to serve their country and, at the same time, to be assured (as they have every right to be assured) that their positions would be permanent and pensionable. These men had acquired vested rights, the country was under an obligation to them, and he had sufficient confidence in his country that these obligations would be fulfilled."

Lord Selborne, at a meeting of the Inter-Colonial Council on 30th May, 1906, said—

> "We ask you to sanction pension regulations . . . to fulfil those hopes which had been admitted and encouraged that their services would be pensionable."

Sir Richard Solomon speaking at the Legislative Council on 25th May, 1906, said that—

> "Although a pensions ordinance had been drafted assuring the *status* and tenure of office of members of the Civil Service and providing for their pensions, it would not be introduced that session. It might safely be left to the men of that country to protect the position of members of the Civil Service."

It has never been disputed by those who are in authority in the Transvaal that the civil servants engaged by the Colonial Office and those acting with the Colonial Office in the Transvaal believed and were told that their positions would be permanent and pensionable, and surely a legal duty rests upon this Government to see that justice is done. But a duty far beyond a legal duty rests upon them. There is a moral duty and a moral obligation resting upon them to see that justice is done to these civil servants. Consider the position of the civil servant. A man of education, of knowledge, and of skill goes out to the Transvaal and takes upon himself some very important judicial or administrative duty. He marries or he brings his family out. He purchases furniture or has it conveyed out to him, and he establishes himself in the full belief that he will be there permanently. But then it happens that the service becomes overstocked. I am not quarrelling with retrenchment. I believe that that retrenchment was necessary, but there may be differences of opinion as to the way it was carried out. Into that I do not wish to enter, because I do not want to be controversial. But the retrenchment we will say is necessary. What is the position of a man who has not a profession in the ordinary sense of the term? He is not a lawyer, doctor, or civil engineer, who can return to this country and enter into competition for the thousands of openings that occur here or in other portions of the Empire. The openings for him are very few; but he comes back to this country and goes to the Colonial Office and asks that he may be given employment in West Africa, East Africa, or elsewhere. The reply is that the openings are very few, but I venture to say that this Government is in honour bound and this country is also in honour bound to see that these men if they cannot get work in the Colonial service are given openings in other Departments of the State. These civil servants have received compensation and been dismissed, but their compensation has not carried them home. There are cases in which the compensation has been so small that men have been able to send their wives and families home second class, but have had to work their way home themselves. That no doubt is very creditable to them but not to the Government or the country. No Government and no country can afford that their civil servants should be placed in such a position. These are honest hard-working men who in the Transvaal have received not very high salaries, which they have exhausted in consequence of the great cost of living, and they find themselves dismissed, with a miserable compensation, and told to go back to the land from which they came, where there is no opening for them. I believe I am representing common sense and the sense of justice of this House, when I say to the right hon. Gentleman that he and his colleagues really lost a great opportunity when, on granting the Constitution, they did not arrange definitely for the compensation and pensions of these civil servants, and when later upon guaranteeing the loan they did not then make it a condition. But is it too late? I do not think so, for General Botha himself, who has always acknowledged the claims of these civil servants, said in a speech in June, 1907—

> "It is a matter of regret to the Government that it will not be possible to introduce a Pension Bill or Civil Servants Bill during this session. The reorganisation of the Civil Service, which is one of the most important tasks confronting the Government, is still proceeding, and we feel that until the reorganisation is complete the present state of affairs as regards civil servants should not be disturbed. Next year these measures will be brought forward by the Government. In the meantime the Government will inquire into the equitable claims of the servants of the late South African Republic for pensions for loss of office, in order that Parliament may be able to see what financial liability such claims for recognition may afford."

I fancy the last sentence will not strike the House very agreeably, but they will see by that statement that the present Prime Minister recognises the responsibility. The late Lieutenant-Governor has recognised it, and the late Attorney-General, and the acting Lieutenant-Governor of the Transvaal have also recognised it. In face of the fact that a Pension Bill is to be brought in and considered, seeing the influence the present Government has with the Transvaal, I submit that the time has come for them now, this year, to take an opportunity, not to intervene, not to intercede, but strongly to insist that these men who have been, let us say unwittingly, wronged should be righted. That they have been wronged I am as certain of as that I am here; that they have been unwittingly wronged I sincerely hope. But it is for the Government to show its good will, and I cannot but feel that this Government who have in the past shown such sympathy for those not of our own race will feel that they cannot possibly afford to show a lack of sympathy with those of our own race in so hard a case. I said I did not wish to be controversial, and I do not wish to be, but let me point out in what way the Government could make representations. For instance, the Constabulary is being retrenched, and the duties which have been done by them are now being done by another body altogether, that is the field cornets. Now what are the duties of the Constabulary? The right hon. Gentleman knows thoroughly well what they are. Those duties are now being taken over by the field cornets who receive less salary, because there are more of them. Now, of seventy-three appointments to the Field Cornet regiment only two bear English names. I hope that the House will realise that the officers of the constabulary in the Transvaal devoted themselves to learning the Dutch language. They could not fill all these duties which they had to fulfil without a knowledge of the Dutch language, yet of seventy-two men who are to take their place and perform these duties two only bear English names. I ask that in this change British men who are liked by the people should receive a fair proportion of the positions. Throughout the Colony the constabulary are respected and beloved for their justice, and new men are being appointed to take their place whose chief qualification is that they are Dutchmen.

MR. CHURCHILL: I deny it.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: The hon. Gentleman denies it. Well, he will have an opportunity of controverting what I have said. I am sorry that anything I have said should call for denial, because I have been very careful to state nothing but what is actual fact. Out of 111 appointments seventy-nine are old civil servants and thirty-two are new. Out of eighty-two officials twenty-eight are old and fifty-four are new. That is to say, that the Colonial Government has gone outside the old service for its men. I do not say the Boers have been taken because they are Boers. But what I do say is that it is the duty of the Transvaal Government to preserve in its service, except in case of misdemeanour, those men who have faithfully served the country and who have nobly done their duty. Before I sit down, I want to make one more statement, and that is that the Imperial Government is bound to intercede in the case of the Transvaal Civil Servants if they base their action concerning the granting of the Constitution upon the Report of the West Ridgway Committee. Because it is known that the West Ridgway Committee was greatly concerned for the future welfare of the civil servants of the Transvaal. It is well known that the Committee made certain recommendations, and I hope the hon. Gentleman the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies will be able to-night to state what those recommendations were concerning the civil servants. I state categorically in this House that the West Ridgway Committee were very greatly concerned for the welfare of these civil servants in the Transvaal, and made certain recommendations which, if carried out, would have prevented at the present time the great discontent and feeling of wrong from which these retrenched civil servants are suffering. This Government granted the Transvaal Constitution on the Report of the West Ridgway Committee, which the Prime Minister said was sent out to gain information to enable the Government to form an opinion. In every other case they took the advice of the West Ridgway Committee, but in this particular case they did not. They did not act on a single recommendation which the Committee made with regard to these civil servants.

MR. CHURCHILL asked where the hon. Gentleman obtained his information. The Report of the West Ridgway Committee was an entirely secret and confidential document, and he would like to know how the hon. Gentleman could know upon what point the Government had diverged from that Report.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I have stated the point upon which the Government have diverged from the Report, and if necessary will state it again.

*MR. CHURCHILL: I desire to ask the hon. Gentleman how he knows.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: It is for the right hon. Gentleman to deny the statements I have made if he finds they are inaccurate, but it has come to my knowledge that they have diverged from the recommendations of that Report. The West Ridgway Report has not been confined, any more than previous confidential Reports, to the knowledge and use of one particular department. I did not get my information from the Colonial Office or any official source.

*MR. CHURCHILL: Will the hon. Baronet tell the House the source from which he did obtain it?

SIR GILBERT PARKER: If the hon. Gentleman challenges my statements I will ask Sir West Ridgway whether they are not true. It is regrettable that in this case, which calls for British sympathy and action, the Government should take the stand they do. Their action warrants me and those who think with me in asking them to do their utmost for these civil servants for whom we speak to-night. I appeal to the right hon. Gentleman, because I think it is not yet too late, first, that the Government should press upon the Transvaal Government the necessity for the Pensions Ordnance being passed through the Transvaal Legislature—because, after all, this Government is primarily responsible for the appointing of this Civil Service. It may have been a mistake, but we ourselves are bound to carry out this pledge to the men who trusted us. It is an Imperial responsibility that cannot be dropped. I therefore ask the Government to intercede and press for the passing of the forthcoming Pensions Bill, and most earnestly to intervene and enable these civil servants in the Transvaal who have been retrenched and who have to begin again, if not in the Transvaal in other parts of the world, to do so in such a way that a stigma shall not rest upon the Government, and that men who have done well shall not be able to go abroad and say: "We worked well, we laboured, and we fought, and our reward was starvation." I beg to move the Amendment standing in my name.

MR. EVELYN CECIL (Aston Manor) said that in seconding the Amendment he did not wish to exploit mere Party advantages. The Party with which he was associated had criticised strongly in the past the Transvaal policy of the Government. Of course the situation of these civil servants arose directly out of that policy, but he did not think it would be patriotic to try and get Party advantages out of it at this time. In consequence they had refrained ever since the Constitution had been granted from making attacks which might and would, perhaps, prevent the ultimate success of the Transvaal Colony, and they did not desire now to pursue any different course. But they did want to plead very earnestly for the positions of these men. There were a considerable number of them. They took the service with the clear understanding in many cases that the employment was permanent and pensionable. That was quite certain from what his hon. friend had quoted from the speeches of Sir Arthur Lawley and Lord Selborne. Therefore it was only right that the Government should keep the word of its agents. Sir Arthur Lawley's language was so clear and so concise that, coming as it did from the Colonial Office, in his opinion, it constituted a pledge to these men. That being so, he thought it was only right that the Government should take the case in hand. We wanted men in very difficult circumstances and we got them. Many of them gave up opportunities and employment at home for the service of their country. They went out to cope with difficult circumstances, to take part in what was always a very responsible matter—the starting of a new Government—and under those cirucmstances it was only just and fair that they should be given some chances of compensation for the position in which they were now placed. He ventured to think that men who had sacrificed their prospects of promotion and the best years of their life under these conditions, who were placed in their present position through no fault of their own, and who, in some cases, were too old to start afresh on coming back to this country, deserved well of their country, and ought to be granted the conditions under which they took their office. He did not want to make any Party capital out of the matter. It was merely a question of justice, and it was upon the grounds of justice that they pleaded their cause. They were our own people, kith and kin British, and it must be somewhat galling to them to see ex-burghers and others, who fought against this country, put in their places; but they had been dignified and had not made undue protest or any scene. They had been forbearing, and now they asked them to put their case before the House. He thought it was only right and fair, before it was too late, that the Government should do something for them and should endeavour to safeguard and right their position. There were many of them who had been discharged with one month's salary for every year they had served. That was a very small sum considering the positions they had given up. There were many more cases to come, because the intercolonial council would come to an end next June. It meant that a number more of these servants ran the risk of being discharged with equally little compensation and absolutely no pension. In view of their numbers, of what they had given up to go out and start the Government in the Transvaal, and of the promises and conditions under which they understood they were serving, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman and the Secretary of State for the Colonies would give a fair consideration to their case.

Amendment proposed—

> "At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'But we humbly represent to Your Majesty that this House regrets that Your Majesty's Government has not taken advantage of its opportunities to safeguard the interests of retrenched civil servants of the Transvaal Administration and secure for them due compensation and pension.'"—(*Sir Gilbert Parker.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. WEDGWOOD (Newcastle-under-Lyme) said that, as an old official of the Transvaal, he would like to thank the hon. Member for Gravesend for the very moderate and non-partisan way in which he had always presented the case of the Transvaal Civil servants to the House. He would not go so far as to say that he thought the Transvaal Civil servants had a legal claim against His Majesty's Government, but in the absence of any legal claims the moral claim against the Government became stronger. He recollected very well that each year he served in the Transvaal brought a promise of a Pension Bill, and they were told that their position would be legalised. But the Pension Law was never passed, and they recognised that legally they were absolutely stranded if they lost office. Therefore, he did not think, unless there were specific cases of promise, that they could go so far as to say they had any legal claim on the Government for compensation. He wished to give the House some idea of the manner in which the officials had been retrenched, for that was the chief ground of their claim upon this country. They had been retrenched because South Africa was in a very low financial position. He did not believe they were retrenched because they were English or because they fought against the late Repubilc, but in the first place because the country was in a bad way, and they had to cut down the Civil Service. Unfortunately, the Transvaal Government, being composed of business-men, cut out all those men first who had no claims to pensions, and left in all the old Boer officials who had come from Cape Colony and Natal. That was the reason why all the English members of the Transvaal Civil Service had come home. He did not say it was the only reason; but the chief reason had undoubtedly been economy. There was another reason which he thought the House ought also to understand. Many of the English officials were in a semi-judicial position. They had to administer justice or perform executive duties, and they thus became not only in intimate relation with the native population, but even in hostile contact with it. One could not administer justice without exciting heated animosity on the part of the people he was called upon to judge, and months before the General Election in the Transvaal, and months before the officials were retrenched, it was common talk in the districts that they were going to be retrenched. Although they were in a judicial position, they therefore had the feeling that every one of their decisions would have a serious effect upon their future. Some of them tried to please the natives in order to keep their position, but, he thanked God, the majority of them being English first took care that no personal advantage should have the slightest influence upon their judicial actions and executive functions. It was those men, in particular, who had walked straight, and had not deviated from the narrow paths of uprightness, who had the greatest claim on the Government. He knew one resident magistrate who had occasion to suspend a local attorney, and forbid him to practice in his court. That attorney put it about the town that he would get rid of the magistarte at the first opportunity. The magistrate was retrenched and sent home. There were other cases nearly as bad where the Het Volk had threatened civil servants, and had then proceeded to get rid of them, because they administered justice without fear or favour. He recognised that the Colonial Office could not absorb the whole of these civil servants at once, and many of them were not pre-eminently suited for Colonial Office work; but he thought other Departments of the Government should make an effort to absorb them. They could be employed by the Home Office in the charge of gaols, and as inspectors by the Local Government Board, by the Commissioner of Works, and in numerous other vacancies as they occurred in the various Departments; and he thought the effort should be made for the country's own good fame, not only here, but in the Colonies as well, to find work for those who were now stranded. It was really an appeal *ad misericordiam*, but he hoped His Majesty's Government would consider the claim these people had upon them, and do their best to find posts for all those who had been retrenched.

*MR. CHURCHILL: I had hopes that the Colonial Office would escape this Amendment. There were two other Amendments relating to Colonial matters on the Paper. I am glad we are relieved from the necessity of debating either of those, and I venture to believe that in this new matter which is now brought forward it will be found that at any rate the subject is not one which need lead to any acute or bitter controversy. I have no reason to complain of the speeches made on the other side, certainly not of the speech made by the hon. Gentleman opposite, if I may say so without effrontery—quite one of the best speeches I have had the pleasure of hearing him deliver on Colonial matters. Only on one point do I criticise him. He referred to a secret and confidential Report of the Government. If he has seen a copy of that Report, he has seen it in consequence of a breach of confidence, and it is his duty to denounce the person who has shown it him. I am not going to say in answer to his question whether the Government policy is or is not in accordance with this or that particular in the Report. I do not think a confidential Report, which the Government desire to keep secret and which the House of Commons has desired should be kept secret, should be quoted in the House and Ministers dared to say whether this or that particular is correct. I dare say the hon. Gentleman did not realise the seriousness of some of his remarks.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: The right hon. Gentleman will allow me to say perhaps, that I have not read the whole of the Ridgeway Report, and it did not come into my hands improperly. My sources of information were not improper sources.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The fact remains that the House of Commons has decided upon the advice of the Government that this Report should remain a secret Paper, the property of the State; as much the property of hon. Gentlemen opposite when they come into power as it is now of the present Government. The House has heard the hon. Gentleman admit that he has read a part of the Report. I do not wish, however, to press the point. Every one knows that English public life has many shades, and that contrasts are not always sharp black and white. But I do object—not to put it as a serious hostile point—to the style of controversy which quotes a secret document and challenges the Government to say whether it is in some respect correct. Now I come to the question the hon. Gentleman has raised. The question raised is divided into two parts, the position of the civil servants and the policy of the Government which has retrenched them. These are the two parts. It is very easy indeed to make out a case of hardship. There are hardships. Life is full of hard cases. There are unemployed not only in the Transvaal Civil Service, but all though the whole system of our society there are persons who indulge hopes that their employment will be constant and their progress steady until at the end of their lives they will be assured of pensions. Such good fortune does not happen to the vast run of humanity. Nearly the whole mass of humanity have to face a much more bitter problem of life than that. I submit with great respect—no unkind word shall pass from my lips on the subject of the retrenched civil servants—but before we embark on a great movement of sympathy with particular civil servants who have been retrenched, we should affirm the general proposition that the State is not obliged to do more for any person who contracts with it than the contract specifically says. Policy may temper the application of that rule, but if you are to take up a general position on behalf of the State you are bound only by the letter of the contract. I would much rather put forward the other point of view. It is a more grateful and more easy point of view to put forward. I only submit what were the obligations which were contracted in respect of these civil servants and the way in which they have been met. But the House knows perfectly well how the Transvaal Civil Service was formed. The country was devastated. After the war was over the devastation of the country continued. During the last period of the war the Civil Service had to be created. Persons were collected from all parts—persons of different ages and different professions were brought into that Civil Service, and from the very beginning it was an abnormal service, a service essentially to meet an emergency and essentially characterised by an element of impermanence. That I do not think is denied by anyone. There were three main classes of civil servants. There were those who were transferred from the British service to the Transvaal Civil Service—that is to say men who had pensionable offices at home who were moved into the Transvaal service. Those I call the transferred civil servants. Then there were persons who were not transferred but engaged to meet the emergency, but who nevertheless belonged to what might be called the established Civil Service of the Transvaal; and in addition there was a great number of unestablished and temporary appointments. Such was the Civil Service of the Transvaal. The transferred civil servants—the men who had pensionable offices and an assured position in the British Civil Service, and had been transferred, have in all cases received pensions or employment since the change of administration. The unestablished and temporary civil servants were bound by the very nature of their appointment. They were engaged for a temporary period, and when that temporary period of employment was over they were removed from their appointments, and the Government service went on without them. That is a position which confronts people in every other walk of life. It confronts the engineer, the lawyer the Minister of the Crown. All engaged on essentially temporary employment are liable on the withdrawal of the employment, if the conditions are temporary, to have to take their place in the ordinary struggle of life, which in the present organisation of society is the rough rule of the road. I turn to the class of non-transferred but established civil servants. In 1905 a Commission was appointed by the Government of the Transvaal. I am not sure whether the right hon. Gentleman was in office in 1905 or not. At any rate I am sure he will accept all responsibility for the acts of his predecessor. Under the right hon. Gentleman's Government the Transvaal appointed a Commission to investigate the whole conditions of the Civil Service there, and the Commission was headed by an eminent Transvaal Judge. The Commission proposed a pension scheme for the Civil Service, and advocated certain reductions. That pension scheme was in essence this: Every civil servant should make a contribution from his pay towards his pension. These contributions should go towards a fund. Towards that fund the Government of the Transvaal should contribute pound for pound, and the resulting fund should be a pool from which the pensions of the civil servants should be drawn. But the Commission recommended that the Government should decline to guarantee the solvency of the fund—that they should invest the money and guarantee the interest on the investment, contribute pound for pound for the money subscribed by the civil servants, but should not be held responsible that the fund so accumulated would be adequate for the pensionable aspirations and claims of the civil servants. The Government declined to accept its solvency. When it became clear that a change of administration was in prospect in the Transvaal the established civil servants were offered a pension scheme on the basis of the Commissioner's Report. They refused it specifically, and the main ground of refusal was the fact that the Government would not guarantee the solvency of the fund. They said they would prefer to trust themselves to the decision of the newly-elected Legislature. That was their choice on the issue that was presented to them. The Crown Colony Government under Lord Selborne, for which we were then responsible, debated whether it would be better to pass another pension law meeting the views of the Civil servants, and departing from the recommendations of the Commission. They came to the conclusion that such a law could not be passed except by the over-riding of every unofficial representative of the Legislative Council, most of whom had been appointed under the tenure of the right hon. Gentleman. Most of the prominent men he had been relying on for the Government of the Transvaal were opposed to the institution of a pension scheme which departed from the recommendation of the Judges Commission. That being so, we passed into responsible government on that basis. What has happened since reponsible Government has been established? One would think to hear the speeches of hon. Gentlemen opposite, that all the British civil servants in the Transvaal had been summarily dismissed from their offices and their places filled up by others. The impression produced on the House was that a tremendous expulsion of British civil servants had followed and—although I was very glad to notice that no imputation of unfairness was urged against the Transvaal Government—that a vast revolution had taken place in the Government service. Under the Government of General Botha, between 1st May, and 1st October, 1907, 144 established civil servants, so called, had been retrenched or discharged. I think about ten or twelve of them had been discharged and their places filled and the remaining 120 odd had been retrenched from the service. In 1903–1904, 187 civil servants holding on exactly the same tenure, facing exactly the same problem of life, exposed to exactly the same difficulties and privations on the termination of their employment were discharged by Lord Milner from the Transvaal in pursuance of a policy of retrenchment which was forced upon them by the shrinkage in the revenues of the country and by the necessity of readjusting the Civil Service to normal conditions. The conditions under which these two sets of Civil servants have been discharged are precisely the same. I am not here to say whether they are adequate or not. All I say is that under Lord Milner and the right hon. Gentleman or the Member for West Birmingham, who preceded him, there were 187 members of the Transvaal Civil Service who had been engaged for service in the country discharged and 144 discharged by General Botha in the period I have mentioned on precisely the same conditions. What are those conditions? I am shocked to tell the House that the conditions are those which by law were guaranteed. I do not wish in the least to say these are not hard conditions. They are hard conditions, but they are not harder than those of many men in the ordinary rough and tumble of life—

> (*a*) If the officer show can an undertaking in writing—oral assurances must be rejected—given him on his appointment that he was engaged as a member of the permanent staff.
>
> (*b*) If the officer is of a class which, as a whole, or the clear majority of which, the Public Service Commission treat as established, even if he is supernumerary in that class.

may be granted a gratuity on retrenchment on the following terms—

> One month's salary for each year of service calculated on the basis of the officer's average annual salary for three years immediately preceding his retirement and a proportionate gratuity for periods of service of less than a year, provided that an officer had completed one year's service; and a gratuity in lieu of vacation (but not occasional) leave admissible to him at the date of retrenchment.

These were the terms on which the reorganisation was conducted by Lord Milner and by General Botha. It may be said they are hard terms, but I am anxious to submit that it does not lie with those who supported the previous retrenchment to accuse us of hard terms, nor does any impeachment lie against the Transvaal Government, who carried out strictly the terms which their predecessors had imposed. Then I come to the constabulary. The hon. Member for Gravesend said the constabulary was engaged as a permanent and pensionable force. That is one of those half truths which are extremely difficult to meet. Persons have been allowed to enter the constabulary on the understanding that if they served for a lengthy period of time they would receive a pension, but a provision was inserted in the terms of their engagement that if at an earlier period it was desirable to reduce or retrench the force it should so be reduced or retrenched, and, not having qualified they should not receive a pension. The regulations say:—

1. A superannuation allowance shall be granted, on retirement, to a member of the Force who has attained the age of fifty years.

If a Commissioned Officer of the Force ceases to be employed through the abolition of his own or another office, or through a reduction of establishment, or through a reorganisation in the Force, he shall be entitled—

(*a*) If his serivce is less than ten years, to a gratuity equal to one month's average salary for each year of service.

(*b*) If his service is ten years or more, either to a gratuity equal to one month's average salary for each year of service, or to an annuity equal to one-fiftieth of his average salary for each year of service, but not so as to exceed three-fifths of his average salary, as the High Commissioner and Governor may determine.

2. If a member of the Force lose his life from an injury received by him in the execution of duty involving special risk, and as a result of such duty, whether death occurs immediately or within a year after the injury, his widow and minor children, if any, shall be paid either a gratuity equal to one month's average salary for each year of service, rendered by the deceased, or an annuity equal to one-fiftieth of his average salary for each year of service, but not so as to exceed three-fifths of his average salary. Provided that, for the purposes of this Section, the deceased's services shall be deemed to be his actual service enhanced by the number of years, if any, by which his age at death falls short of fifty. Provided also that, if a gratuity under Section 3 had been granted to the deceased, it shall be deducted in convenient instalments from the payments made under this Section.

3. No pension shall be granted to members of the Force except upon condition that it is liable to be forfeited and may be withdrawn by the High Commissioner and Governor in any of the following cases:—

(*a*) On conviction of the grantee of any crime or offence.

(*b*) On his knowingly associating with suspected persons, thieves, or other offenders.

(*c*) On his refusing to resume his duties in his former office when required to do so by the High Commissioner and Governor in accordance with any regulations made under Proclamation No. 24 of 1900.

(*d*) If he shall make use of the fact of his former employment in the Force in a manner which the High Commissioner and Governor considers to be improper.

4. Any member of the Force who has attained the age of forty years, and who has served with diligence and fidelity for not less than twenty years, shall be entitled to retire upon a gratuity at the rate of one month's average salary for every year of service.

5. In the calculation of gratuities or annuities under these Regulations "Salary" means consolidated pay only and does not include allowances or any other emoluments, and "average salary" means the average of the salary drawn by a member of the Force during the last three years of his service or during this whole service, whichever may be the shorter period.

6. An annuity granted under Section 4 to a widow or minor child shall cease, in the case of the widow on re-marriage, in the case of a son at the age of twenty-one, and in the case of a daughter at the age of twenty-one or on marriage if earlier. Such annuities may be withdrawn by the High Commissioner and Governor in the event of misbehaviour.

7. Any member of the Force who has been discharged or dismissed therefrom for misconduct shall not be entitled to any pension, gratuity, or allowance.

8. The High Commissioner and Governor may permit the period of service of any member of an existing Police Force who shall be appointed to serve in the South African Constabulary to be reckoned for the computation of pension or gratuity under these Regulations.

The House will see that the pensionable claim of these constabulary officers and men was only operative in the event of their service for a very long period of time, whereas full permission was taken to dispense with them after they had served for a shorter period. I can only say that in these respects the rule had been most strictly followed. It is not conceivable that any British Government would allow its promise to any individual to be broken. If a promise had been made and could be proved in writing in respect to any individual the Government is bound, it goes without saying, to perform it. But this Government and the Transvaal, like any other Government in the world, is not obliged to go in respect to law or equity beyond the limits of its legal obligations. When I have said that I say that as far as the Colonial Office is concerned we will do our very utmost to employ valuable public servants who have been retrenched or have lost their employment in the Transvaal as far as the patronage of the Colonial Office will go. We cannot undertake to appoint a man to a position for which he is not suited in another Colony, but as far as we can, and we have already done something, we will endeavour to meet hard cases. I feel very strongly on this subject myself, taking as I do a great pride in the Transvaal settlement, and I should be very sorry if a comparatively small number of individuals went out and felt they had a grievance and suffered through an arrangement which on the whole has been vastly beneficial. I agree with what has been said by the hon. Gentleman. I hope every Department of the State will co-operate, because the patronage of the Colonial Office is limited, in trying to find employment for really suitable men. Some of these are extremely good men. They have had their chance, through the organisation of the Transvaal Civil Service, of coming forward and showing their quality. The Government might, I think, gain advantage in finding employment for them in other Departments. That I put, not as a matter of right, not as a matter which may be urged as a claim against the Government, but as a matter of sensible, reasonable, and indulgent administration. I have said what I wished to say on the subject of the Transvaal Civil servants. I believe the Transvaal Government is going to introduce a pension system. I do not know what the policy of that Government will be any more than I know what the policy of the Australian Commonwealth will be, and I do not feel entitled too narrowly to inquire, but I have heard from sources of information which are open to me that the Government contemplate introducing a pension system which will protect their established Civil servants in a proper manner, and it is their interest to do so, because if they do not have a pensionable established Civil Service they will not have a good established Civil Service. They know perfectly well that they must give security of tenure to obtain the services of really able men. But there is another aspect, on which I will say a word before I sit down, of the question of the Transvaal Government. I was very glad to notice that hon. Gentlemen who have spoken made no charge of racial animosity against the Transvaal Government. Such a charge has been widely made outside the House and has given considerable pain in the quarters to which it applied. There is nothing more untrue than to say that the Transvaal Government dismissed British subjects in order to to fill their places with Dutchmen. General Botha said on 14th October, at Randfontein that—

> "No Englishman had ever been dismissed to make room for a Dutchman. The unhappy policy of retrenchment was inherited from their predecessors and had been carried out not by Boers but by Englishmen who had started the policy long before they could bring any opinion to bear upon it. He would like to say emphatically that no Englishman had been retrenched to make room for a Dutchman."

These statements are borne out by the figures which have been committed to me and which I put before the House with what authority the Colonial Office and the right hon. Gentleman may claim. One hundred and forty-four retrenchments have been made in the period which I have mentioned. These retrenchments have been absolute retrenchments, by which I mean it has not been a question of getting out one set of servants on account of their being Englishmen and filling the places with Dutchmen. There have been net reductions in the scale of the Civil Service dictated by a more prudent financial administration. The number of British and Dutch Civil Servants in the Transvaal in the established branches, excluding minor officials in the police, prisons, and education departments, is at present about 1,600. At the present moment after the retrenchments have been affected there are 1,198 English officials, judging from their names and as far as their history could be traced; 407 are Dutch. That proportion obtains in a country where the two races are at least on an equality with respect to population. Since the Transvaal Government has been in office, a number of offices have fallen vacant and persons have been removed or retired. How have these appointments been filled? Since 1st March, 1907, 221 new clerical appointments have been made, not in increase of the Civil Service, but in the ordinary course of administration. Of these appointments, 104 persons of Dutch and Colonial nationality, and 117 of British and Irish nationality have been appointed to these places in a Civil Service which already exceeds by, I believe, nearly three to one the proportion of English to Dutch. That has been done by a Government which is no doubt preponderatingly Dutch in its character and complexion. I think it is only due that it should be known that, whatever hardship there may have been to individuals, there has been no unfair ousting of Englishmen to replace them by Dutchmen. Everyone knows that the Transvaal is a self-governing Colony. They are entitled if they can get the consent of their Parliament to make whatever arrangements they choose for their Civil Service, and so long as I speak for Colonial affairs in this House, I will always endeavour to defend it in the exercise of its legitimate rights given it solemnly by Parliament.

*Mr. LYTTELTON (St. George's, Hanover Square): I am sure the House will forgive me for mentioning a personal matter. The right hon. Gentleman in connection with a certain portion of the speech of the hon. Member for Gravesend said something with regard to improper conduct. I do not know what the facts are. I have not had an opportunity of inquiring since the charge was made. I do not think the right hon. Gentleman made it very vigorously or persisted in it, but the House will allow me to say I am perfectly certain, even without investigating the facts, that my hon. friend behind me would never do anything but what was perfectly straightforward. I do not wish for a moment to speak in a controversial manner upon the case which has been presented to the House. The right hon. Gentleman occupied a very considerable portion of his observations—I think he recognises that he did—in meeting charges which had not been made on this side of the House. Not a word has been said or will be said on the present occasion of any charge against General Botha's Government of undue racialism. Not a word will be said against the policy of retrenchment of the Civil Service. We are all agreed that the economic condition of the Transvaal, no matter what the cause of it is, is not one that enables anybody who is conversant with the circumstances to stand here and say that the policy of retrenchment and economy is not necessary. Therefore, I need not trouble myself with that considerable portion of the right hon. Gentleman's remarks in which he justified the policy of retrenchment, which has not been attacked, and justified General Botha's Government as not having been racial when nobody in this debate has alleged that it is. I do not complain of the right hon. Gentleman endeavouring to meet any charges, if he thinks it important, that have been made outside. Let me put to the House what I consider the position. I consider the position is this, that towards a numerous class of civil servants in the Transvaal at this present moment the British Government is under an honourable obligation to fulfil pledges. I do not think that is disputed by the right hon. Gentleman. I went out during the war on a commission to find out the condition of affairs with regard to the obligations of the Boer Republic after the annexation of the two Republics. In every case the commission of which I was Chairman recommended that the obligations which had been entered into by President Kruger's Government, if entered into under circumstances of good faith, and unless forfeited by misconduct, should be honourably fulfilled by the British Government. Of course, it is perfectly obvious that that must be the position at the present moment of the British Government, which by its own act has made the country independent, or practically independent, of the British Government. What is the situation? I asked a question the day before yesterday, and it was admitted by the right hon. Gentleman to be a typical case. I take the case of Major McInerny, who had been carrying on practice as a barrister in Melbourne. He left with the Victorian contingent in 1899, he fought in the war and was seriously wounded, and after he had recovered from his wounds he sat as president of the Court of Martial Law at Pretoria. He afterwards was appointed to the position of resident magistrate at Krugersdorp. After that he was entrusted with what was undoubtedly as laborious and thankless a task as any British subject could engage in in the Transvaal. He went into the claims for compensation on the military receipts which amounted, I believe, to £9,500,000. I think the work of that commission took two or three years, and he fulfilled it with the congratulations of everybody concerned. He was mentioned honourably in the despatches, and at the close of that work he returned to his duties as resident magistrate. This man had bled for the country, and he had worked for it as few men have worked in any part of the Empire. He was retired in September, 1907, as I understand without any pension at all. I shall read in his own words the circumstances of the case.

> "Before the dissolution of the Pretoria High Court the Attorney-General, Sir Richard Solomon (then styled Legal Adviser) wrote informing me of the proposal to dissolve the High Court and inviting me to accept the office of Resident Magistrate under the Civil Administration. I called on Sir Richard Solomon and we discussed the *status* of the office of resident magistrate; I told him that I was a barrister in active practice in Melbourne and that his offer required careful consideration as acceptance of it would mean the abandonment of my practice and the opening of an entirely new career; that I was disposed to entertain his offer as I was inclined to believe that the conditions of the country would afford opportunities for men possessed of administrative power and I asked him what would be the tenure of the office, would it be the usual tenure during good behaviour. 'Yes, the usual tenure of *Quamdiu se bene gesserit.*' I then asked him would the office have pension rights, he replied that pension provision had not yet been made but the usual and proper pension provision would be made."

The right hon. Gentleman told me yesterday that that was a typical case. Let me point out to the House that that is a case which is not covered by the remarks he has made. I have not the exact date, but the appointment was made in 1902 or 1903. The situation is this. There is no pension law at present in existence. [An Hon. Member: "Why not?"] The right hon. Gentleman has already told the House, but I do not think he has stated quite fully why that was so. He must take the policy of the late Government as a whole, and not separate it. So long as the Government of the Transvaal was not self-government no doubt there was control from this country. The representatives of the King in South Africa formally promised that a pension ordinance should be introduced by the representative Government, not by the responsible Government; and when the British Government thought it desirable to give self-government to the Transvaal they were under an honourable obligation to provide that the civil servants should not be handed over to the responsible Government without security.

Mr. CHURCHILL: The language used by the British Commissioners with regard to the promise of pensions was held to have been redeemed when the definite offer to submit a pension ordinance to the Crown Colony administration was made. That definite offer was refused by the civil servants of the Transvaal, and they deliberately preferred to trust themselves to the decision of the newly-elected Legislature.

***Mr. LYTTELTON**: I do not think that is a strictly accurate statement. It was in July 1905 when Sir Arthur Lawley made the extremely strong statement which has already been quoted. No notice whatever had then been given that self-government would be granted, and, therefore, the promise which was made by his Majesty's representative was that a pension ordinance should be passed by a Government in which this country still retained control. There is the difference. His Majesty's Government thought it right to reverse that policy without imposing terms that the promise would be fulfilled. I warned the Government in the most emphatic manner that this was a question which they ought to provide for when giving self-government. I warned them that there were serious questions which they ought not to throw on the shoulders of a young legislature. I warned them that there were difficulties impending with respect to British Indians. They ran past all these danger signals, and the House knows perfectly well what has happened. Again after they granted self-government they had another opportunity of helping civil servants. The Transvaal Government were in need of a loan, and they came and asked for the credit of this country to support them in obtaining £5,000,000. Surely it would have been common prudence to have said that if they wanted money we would give them our support, but that we could only do so on condition that the pledges given to the civil servants would be fulfilled. The House must not mistake me, I am not making the slightest charge against General Botha's Government. They were not his pledges; they were the pledges of the British Government. I have considerable sympathy with General Botha in the matter. What is the position he took up? Speaking on 14th June, 1907, in the Transvaal Legislative Assembly, General Botha said—

> "It is a matter of regret to the Government that it will not be possible to introduce a Pensions Bill or a Civil Service Bill during this session. The re-organisation of the Civil Service which is one of the most important tasks confronting the Government is still proceeding, and we feel until that re-organisation is complete, the present state of affairs as regards the Civil Service should not be disturbed. Next year, however, these measures will be brought forward by the Government. In the meantime the Government will also inquire into the equitable claims of the servants of the late South African Republic to compensation for loss of office in order that Parliament will be in a position to see what financial liability the recognition of such claims will involve."

The House will see that he expected formidable claims would be made on the Transvaal Government by his own countrymen who formerly held posts under President Kruger. The House must see it is not easy, in fact it is difficult, for General Botha to look upon the claims of British civil servants with as liberal and generous a mind as we should desire to him do. Therefore, it comes back to this that His Majesty's Government are bound to see that the obligations formally expressed by the King's representative should be fulfilled. I venture to say that this country, great and powerful though it is, cannot afford to disappoint the legitimate expectations of those who have bled for her and worked for her. I think the right hon. Gentleman has mentioned the admiration with which he has observed the work of the civil servants of the Crown in East Africa. If any idea were to invade the ranks of that splendid service that the British Government, even at some cost here, are not going to fulfil their promises towards comrades and countrymen of their own who had laboured under difficult circumstances for their country, it will produce a feeling throughout the whole of the Empire which, I am sure, this Government would be the last to wish to arouse. This country cannot afford to weaken the firm belief of every British citizen who has hitherto served and fought for the Government abroad that the obligations of the Government will not be technically and nicely examined, but that they will be conscientiously and liberally fulfilled. But, I ought to say, that after the speech made by the right hon. Gentleman, and with his promise of faithful consideration to any case in which a pledge has been distinctly brought home, and to his further pledge that consideration will be given to these cases, not merely by the Colonial Office, but by other Departments, I would not wish to proceed with this vote of censure; and if my hon. friend will accept my advice, though we receive full liberty to recur to this question on other occasions if necessary, I will venture to ask him to withdraw his Motion.

Sir GILBERT PARKER: I beg leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question again proposed.

Mr. LAURENCE HARDY (Kent, Ashford): I desire to move the Amendment standing in my name with reference to the critical condition of the hop industry involving a great diminution in rural employment and requiring urgent and remedial consideration from the Government. The subject of this Motion is not unknown to a good many Members of the House. It is one of great interest, and has received the attention of the House before this. I do not know whether the Government are really aware of the particularly critical condition which has fallen on the hop industry, and I am quite sure that I can enlist their sympathy and consideration, knowing full well all that they have done during the time they have been in office to encourage the cultivation of the soil and bring back population to the land. No one will gainsay that the cultivation of hops provides undoubtedly a larger amount of employment than any other industry. In 1887, this matter was referred to by the late Lord Salisbury, when he spoke of hop growing as one of the most flourishing and important agricultural industries of the country and one which we can ill-afford to lose. It had been well pointed out, said Lord Salisbury, that the industry had great claims on the good-will and consideration of all those who were in a position to benefit it, and its displacement would be more serious than in the case of any other branch of of agricultural industry. That is the claim which I put forward. Of all the authorities connected with the cultivation of hops, the landowners probably at this time may not be so anxious to continue it, because, owing to the scientific manner in which the industry is carried on, a large amount of capital is required, and it is not likely that the landowners will, on that account, encourage the cultivation of the crop. As far as the occupiers are concerned, these have had of late years difficulty in making profits. Besides, the crop is a very speculative one, and many occupiers think that it would be better to turn to fruit cultivation, for which the hop gardens are admirably suitable. The class most seriously affected right through the county of Kent, a district which I represent, by the depression which has fallen upon the industry is the labour connected with the cultivation of hops. Anybody who knows the facts will acknowledge that the rural villages of Kent have been most flourishing, and of quite a different character from villages in other parts of the country. That is due to the enormous amount of labour which the cultivation of hops has employed. This is not confined to labour on the spot, for there is undoubtedly all through the year labour engaged preparing poles in the underwood plantations, which really forms part of the hop industry. Again, it affords an enormous amount of labour to large numbers of men, women, and children who come from the East End of London during the hop-picking season to obtain a most beneficial change of air, to add considerably to their means of subsistence, and carry back health and prosperity to their abodes in town. Now, this industry is not one which can be dealt with by the particular plan put forward by the Government last year. The Small Holdings Act will not meet the difficulties in this case. The Government were willing last year to pursue the experiment of small holdings, and to give to the small holders very considerable advantages amounting almost to a bounty. They said that a small holding required something like fifty acres, and an allotment probably five acres to put a man into a satisfactory position to earn a comfortable subsistence even with other work. But look at the difference in reference to hops. Between two and three acres under the cultivation of hops will provide work for a man and his family for the whole year. If that be so, it will be seen what an enormous advantage it is to encourage this particular industry if we want to secure the greatest productivity of the soil, and bring back the labourers to the land. At all events, there are very special circumstances why the Government should give special consideration in dealing with the matter. As I have said, this is not the first time that the hop industry has been brought before the attention of the House. In 1857 there was an inquiry by Select Committee, and that Committee considered very carefully the position of the trade in hops, which was then, of course, subjected to both Customs and Excise duties. The Committee unanimously accepted the statement put forward by many witnesses, that if the duties on hops which then existed were either modified or abolished, it would eventually prove fatal to the industry. In 1890 another Committee was appointed to inquire into the causes of the steady decrease of the industry, and the serious displacement of labour thereby occasioned; but they failed to discover any special solution of the difficulty, and rather rode off in their Report on the expression of a hope that more favourable times were coming. That hope has not been realised, although occasionally a favourable season has been experienced. The acreage under cultivation of hops has declined from 71,000 to 45,000 acres, and probably 10 per cent. of the area will go out of cultivation this year. At one time hops were grown in thirty-six counties in England, Scotland and Wales; now they are only grown in eight counties, but nearly the whole of the cultivation is confined to the county of Kent. The industry suffers very specially from one particular cause, viz., that the prices of hops are more easily depressed than those of almost any other crop produced in the country. It is much more easy to cause a depression in the hop trade and to bring the prices down below the value than in any other industry. The only possible way of carrying on this industry at a profit is to equalise matters. In bountiful years hop growers know that the prices will be small and there is very little chance of being able to get any large prices for their produce, but in years of greater scarcity, prices rise, and this enables them to balance matters. Since the foreign importation of hops and substitutes for brewing beer the prices have become equalised in the good and the bad years, so that, as the *Field* newspaper said a few days ago, in this year the average loss on the acreage of hops grown in Kent is something like £14, and in some cases it amounts to £20 per acre. Under these circumstances it is almost impossible to carry on this industry unless some very serious help can be given in one way or another. Is it desirable that the industry should entirely go out, and that we should depend for one of our oldest British industries entirely upon foreign supply? Everyone knows the remedy that ninety-nine out of every 100 hop-growers will put forward, viz., tariff reform; but I cannot expect the present Government to consider that for a moment, and I do not apprehend that this forms in any sense a part of that agitation. I am only bringing this forward because it is really a strong question which ought to concern the Government of the country on account of its vast importance to the people engaged in the industry. But nobody can deny that that is a remedy which is put forward and always has been put forward, and was the subject of evidence before the Committee in 1857. It was the subject for the consideration of the Committee in 1870, long before the agitation for tariff reform arose. Therefore one cannot help mentioning this; but if the Government will not approach the one remedy which is the best for the industry, it is possible to ask them to consider any other remedy which will deal with the evil or to promulgate inquiries to see if it is not possible to help the industry in any way. If it cannot be helped by duty perhaps the Government will consider whether it cannot be helped by some form of bounty. They have considered the question in regard to sugar and have not felt it desirable in the interests of the country to put a stop to the bounty in that case. Therefore they might think it desirable to help the hop industry in the same way. There are smaller remedies which we, as hop growers, want, and which we propose laying before the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whom I thank for his courtesy in allowing us to put them before him, which will be much better than going into them at the present moment. In the course of the fiscal agitation it has always been stated that if duties are put on they are eventually paid by the consumer, but there is no trade more heavily harassed by duties than the licensed victuallers' trade. The beer duty has been raised again and again, and I think it can be proved very clearly that the consumer has not been the person who has borne the burden of the tax which has come upon the producers and growers of hops and barley. We hear of legislation in connection with the licensing trade, and I would most earnestly urge that no further burdens should be thrown upon the real old English drink of beer so far as it is composed of the good wholesome ingredients which used to be considered to be the essentials of beer, viz., barley and hops. A very heavy burden is at present placed on two of the oldest industries in the land, namely, the production of barley and hops. I do not think anybody who has not gone through the districts can realise the enormous importance of this industry, and it is one of those which calls for special consideration at the hands of the State. If the Government cannot give the remedy which is put forward by hop growers, then we can at least ask them to receive with the greatest sympathy any proposals that may be put forward for the alteration of the position. I beg to move.

MR. COURTHOPE (Sussex, Rye): I rise to second the Amendment, and I shall do it very briefly, because I have reason to believe that His Majesty's Government have every desire to take a sympathetic view of this matter, and I do not wish to go into the very extended argument that I had prepared. But there is one point that I would just touch upon, and that is the question of casual employment, in the hop fields. Quite apart from permanent employment, the number of those who are engaged in casual employment, and who come down from London, even now is something like 250,000, and in the days when the hop industry was at its best it was very nearly half a million. I am not including the children, but I think that one of the greatest arguments in favour of maintaining the hop industry is the enormous benefit that is conferred on the children who come from the slums. If any hon. Member has lived as I have in the hop districts and seen the change in these children after six weeks in the open air and sunshine he will realise how important it is and how much it means in the way of health to them. In many cases it may mean even life to them. I will not go at any length into the question, as I understand that the Chancellor of the Exchequer is going to make an announcement to-night, and I will bring forward any arguments I have at the deputation. I should like, however, to urge the Government to lose no time in carrying through their intention, because I can assure them that the matter is very pressing indeed. Grubbing is now going on on a very large scale, and if something is not done to induce the hop grower to keep up his plantation of hops, it is not too much to say that hundreds and thousands of acres will go out of cultivation. I beg to second.

Amendment proposed—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'But we humbly represent to Your Majesty that the critical condition of the hop industry, which involves so great a diminution in rural employment, requires urgent and remedial consideration from Your Majesty's Government.'"—(*Mr. Laurence Hardy.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. ASQUITH: I can assure both hon. Gentlemen who have presented their case and who have put it so pointedly before the House that they have the full sympathy of His Majesty's Government in what I am sorry to say is not only the unimprovement of this industry of recent years, but in many respects its deterioration. I do not want to go into the special circumstances which have created this state of things, but I wish to enter a *caveat* against the possibility of benefiting the hop industry by the introduction of a protective duty. At the same time I feel that the matter is one which is ripe for investigation. The last committee which sat on this subject was 1890, and I should suggest that this Motion might be withdrawn, the Government consenting to appoint at the earliest possible moment a Select Committee of this House to try to discover some means of remedying the evils complained of. I think if we could set up an inquiry of that kind representing all those concerned, we might at last find some practical remedy for the grievance of which complaint has been made. If the hon. Gentleman will accept that assurance and withdraw the Amendment the Committee shall be appointed at the earliest possible moment.

MR. AKERS DOUGLAS (Kent, St. Augustine's) who was indistinctly heard, was understood to say: I myself am very greatly interested in this question. We are very anxious to keep our labourers at home upon the land, and we are anxious to see any prospect of their conditions being so improved as to enable them to stay upon the land. My hon. friends who have brought this Motion forward have pressed the Government to give not only their sympathy but their serious attention to this matter. I had hoped that the hon. Baronet who represents the Board of Agriculture might have been able to tell us whether anything was being done in his Department in this connection. But the Chancellor of the Exchequer has promised us a Committee to inquire into the whole question of this depressed industry, and so far as I am concerned I am quite prepared to accept that offer. I advise my hon. friends to accept the proposal that has been made. I have no doubt that the right hon. Gentleman will allow us to see the reference he proposes to draw up, and as we have not been able ourselves to suggest any real remedy, I do not think we can press this question more strongly upon the right hon. Gentleman. I do not agree entirely with his *caveat,* I think some alteration might be effected by the rearrangement of the customs duties. I will not, however, press that now, but conclude my few remarks by thanking the right hon. Gentleman for the Select Committee which he has promised us and expressing the hope that my hon. friends will now withdraw the Amendment.

MR. ROWLANDS (Kent, Dartford) said on behalf of his colleagues on the Ministerial side of the House who represented constituencies where this industry was carried on, that it would give him great satisfaction to have the opportunity of having the whole of this question thrashed out by the Select Committee which had been promised by the right hon. Gentleman. Such a Committee would give the opportunity for anyone who thought they had a remedy to put forward their views of the way in which this industry might be placed in a satisfactory position.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question again proposed.

Debate arising,

Mr. CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER rose in his place, and claimed to move, " That the Question be now put.

Question put, " That the Question be now put."

The House divided :—Ayes, 249 ; Noes, 62. (Division List No. 6.)

AYES.

Acland, Francis Dyke
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Asquith, Rt.Hn. HerbertHenry
Astbury, John Meir
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Sir John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, Hon. Hubert
Beck, A. Cecil
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn,W.(T'w'rHamlets, S.Geo.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bethell,SirJ.H.(Essex,Romf'rd
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Bowerman, C. W.
Branch, James
Bright, J. A.
Brodie, H. C.
Brunner,J.F.L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Brunner,RtHnSirJ.T.(Cheshire
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn.Sydney Chas.
Byles, William Pollard
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton,RtHn.Richard Knight
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Channing, Sir Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Clough, William
Clynes, J. R.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephens (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir W. J. (S. Pancras,W
Compton-Rickett, Sir J.
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, CH (Sussex,E.Grinstd
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Crossley, William J.
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Dewar, Sir J.A. (Inverness-sh)
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, MajorE.Martin(Walsall
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Sir Francis (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Esslemont, George Birnie
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone, Rt.Hn.HerbertJohn
Gooch, George Peabody
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon,Rt.Hn.SirW.Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth,R.L. (Caithn'ss-sh
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harvey, W.E.(Derbyshire, N.E
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemmerde, Edward George
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hodge, John
Hogan, Michael
Holland, Sir William Henry
Holt, Richard Durning
Hove, W.Bateman (Somerset,N
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hyde, Clarendon
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Jones, William(Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Lambert, George
Lamont, George
Law, Hugh H. (Donegal, W.)
Lea,Hugh Cecil(St. Pancras, E.
Leese,SirJosephF.(Accrington)
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever,A.Levy(Essex,Harwich)
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas

Mr. Akers-Douglas.

Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J.M. (Falkirk B'ghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Rt. Hon. Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mallet, Charles E.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Mond, A.
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. G.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murray, James
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Newnes, Sir George (Swansea)
Nicholson, Charles N. (Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
Parker, James (Halifax)
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearson, W.H.M. (Suffolk, Eye)
Phillipps, Col. Ivor (S'th'mpton
Phillipps, J. Wynford (Pembroke
Pollard, Dr.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Priestley, W.E.B. (Bradford, E.
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, N. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mptn
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robinson, S.
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Scott, A.H. (Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seely, Colonel
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smyth, Thomas F. (Leitrim, S.
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Thompson, J. W. H. (Somerset, E
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Verney, F. W.
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Walters, John Tudor
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent
Ward, W. Dudley (Southampt'n
Waring, Walter
Warner Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Rt. Hn. E (Clackmannan
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, Henry A.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Whitbread, Howard
White, Sir George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley John Henry, (Halifax)
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams Llewelyn (Carmarth'n
Williamson, A.
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, Hon. G. G. (Hull, W.)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wood, T. M'Kinnon

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Balcarres, Lord
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, Sir John S. Harmood-
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bowles, G. Stewart
Boyle, Sir Edward
Brace, William
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Bull, Sir William James
Carlile, E. Hildred
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Clancy, John Joseph
Clark, George Smith (Belast, N.
Coates, E. Feetham (Lewisham
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Cross, Alexander
Dalrymple, Viscount
Devlin, Joseph
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duffy, William J.
Fletcher, J. S.
Gibbs, G. A. Bristol, (West)
Guinness, Walter Edward
Gwynn, Stephen Lucius
Halpin, J.
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hardy, Laurence (Kent Ashford
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Jenkins, J.
Keswick, William
Lardner, James Carrige Rushe
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
MacVeigh, Charles, (Donegal, E.
Magnus, Sir Philip
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Patrick A.
Morrison-Bell, Captain
Murphy, John (Kerry, East)
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nicholson, Wm. G. (Petersfield
Nield, Herbert
O'Malley, William
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Percy, Earl
Phillips, John (Longford, S.)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, F.E. (Liverpool, Walton)
Starkey, John R.
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thornton, Percy M.
Warde, Col. C. E. (Kent, Mid.)
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Viscount Valentia and Mr. Forster.

Main Question put accordingly, and agreed to.

Resolved, That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth :—

" *Most Gracious Sovereign,*

" We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."

To be presented by Privy Council and Members of His Majesty's Household.

SUPPLY.

Resolved, "That this House will, To-morrow, resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to His Majesty."—(*Mr. Runciman.*)

Ordered, That the several Estimates presented to this House during the present session be referred to the Committee of Supply.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Resolved, "That this House will, To-morrow, resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Ways and Means for raising the Supply to be granted to His Majesty."—(*Mr. Runciman.*)

HOUSE OF COMMONS (KITCHEN AND REFRESHMENT ROOMS).

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to control the arrangements for the Kitchen and Refreshment Rooms in the Department of the Serjeant at Arms attending this House.

Ordered, That the Committee do consist of Seventeen Members.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of: Mr. Barnard, Sir William Cremer, Mr. Dalziel, Mr. Fenwick, Viscount Helmsley, Colonel Sir Ivor Herbert, Mr. John Deans Hope, Sir James Jacoby, Colonel Lockwood, Mr. Lonsdale, Mr. McKillop, Mr. Power, Mr. William Redmond, Sir Edward Strachey, Mr. Thorne, Mr. Walrond, and Mr. Osmond Williams.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, "That Three be the Quorum."—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

On the Motion for the adjournment of the House.

MR. FORSTER (Kent, Sevenoaks): I should like to ask for the convenience of the House generally what arrangements will be made for balloting for notices of Motion on going into Committee of Supply. Under the circumstances under which the balloting has taken place in recent years, there has been an opportunity, while Questions were proceeding, for Members to enter their names on the ballot paper. To-morrow the House meets at twelve o'clock. There are no questions and public business begins as a rule about eight or ten minutes past twelve. If the ballot paper is not available for the signatures of Members before twelve o'clock, that will leave but a bare seven or eight minutes during which it will be possible for something like 200 or 300 Members to enter their names. Under those circumstances, it seems to me there will be scanty opportunity for hon. Members who take advantage of the opportunity given to them to secure an opportunity of bringing forward notices of Motion on going into Committee of Supply. If I may be permitted, I should like to ask you what arrangements will be made so as to give to Members of the House generally an opportunity of securing a favourable place in the ballot.

MR. SPEAKER: The Book should be placed in the "No" Lobby at or immediately before twelve, and it will be open to Members to write their names in it whilst prayers are going on. As soon as prayers are over, the Book will be brought in and placed on the Table in the usual place. I will be careful not to call on Motions until I see that all those desirous of subscribing their names have done so. When the list is completed, we will proceed with the notices of Motion.

And, it being after half-past Eleven of the clock, Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Order.

Adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Twelve o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 7th February, 1908.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order 62 has been complied with, viz.:—Madras Railway Company (Purchase) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PETITIONS.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

Petition from Nottingham, against; to lie upon the Table.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES (IRELAND).

Petition from Donaghadee, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSED PREMISES (EXCLUSION OF CHILDREN).

Petitions for legislation: From Birkenhead (five); Bradford; Chingford; Cowes; Eastbourne; Grimsby; Hornsey (three); Hull; Marsden; Muswell Hill; Neath; Newport; Norwich; Rock Ferry; Ryde; Stroud (two); and Swansea (two); to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY.

Petitions for legislation: From Birmingham; Bottisham; Bournemouth; Brighton; Easington Lane; Eltringham; Houghton-le-Spring; Ingleborough; London; Middleton in Teesdale (two); New Silksworth; Sandown; Seghill (two); Stantonbury (two); Stone (two); Sunderland; Thornley; Todmorden; Tow Law; Truro; Wheatley Hill; and Wroxhall; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

DUCHY OF CORNWALL.

Return [presented 6th February] to be printed. [No. 10.]

DESTRUCTIVE INSECTS AND PESTS ACTS, 1877 AND 1907.

Copy presented, of an Order, dated 29th November, 1907, entitled "American Gooseberry Mildew (Prohibition of Importation of Bushes) Order of 1907" [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

DESTRUCTIVE INSECTS AND PESTS ACTS, 1877 AND 1907.

Copy presented, of an Order, dated 10th December, 1907, entitled "The American Gooseberry Mildew Order of 1907" [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY INSURANCE COMPANIES ACT, 1907.

Copy presented, of Board of Trade Rules (Underwriters) [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY INSURANCE COMPANIES ACT, 1907.

Copy presented, of Board of Trade Rules (Employers' Liability Insurance Companies) [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATION.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 28th January, 1908, granting a special pension to Sir Mackenzie Dalzell Chalmers, K.C.B., C.S.I., late Permanent Under Secretary of State for the Home Department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SHETLAND MAIL SERVICE.

Copy ordered, "of Contract, dated the 6th day of December, 1907, between the Postmaster General and the North of Scotland and Orkney and Shetland Steam Navigation Company, for the conveyance of Mails between Aberdeen and the Shetland Islands; together with the Copy of the Treasury Minute thereon, dated the 6th day of February, 1908."—(*Mr. Runciman.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Purchase of Cavehill and Whitewell Tramways.

MR. J. DEVLIN (Belfast W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether his attention has been called to the fact that a plebiscite of Belfast citizens is to be taken on the question of the agreement of the 1st May, 1907, under which the Belfast

Corporation were to take over the Cavehill and Whitewell Tramways for the sum of £60,000; whether he is aware that the Belfast Trades' Council has issued a manifesto, opposing the purchase, in the interests of the wage-earners: whether Messrs. J. and G. White and Co., who constructed the tramways, are the same firm as, or in any way connected with, the British Electric Traction Company; whether he is aware that Messrs White and Co. undertook the work without any contract, except that they were to receive £50,000 worth of shares in the tramway company, and that the cost of the tramways was about £10,000; whether he is aware that some of the members of the Belfast Corporation are shareholders in the tramway company, and that Mr. Nance, the manager of the Belfast Corporation Tramways, was, in 1904, chairman of the directors of the Cavehill and Whitewell Tramway Company, and that one of the present directors of the company is Mr. Robert Dunlop, a member of the Belfast Corporation; and whether, seeing that the balance sheet for 1906 showed that the capital outlay on the old line was £13,525 odd, and that the traffic receipts of the tramways for 48 weeks ending the 6th of December last were £4,076, being a decrease of £230 on the same period of the previous year, the Local Government Board proposes to take any action to safeguard the interests of the ratepayers in the matter

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Local Government Board had no information in regard to the matters of fact alleged in the Question, but have been furnished by the Town Clerk of Belfast with the following statement on the subject:—"A plebiscite was taken in regard to the proposed purchase of the Cavehill and Whitewell tramways, and it resulted in favour of the confirmation of the agreement for purchase by a majority of 12,158 votes. A circular was issued against the Bill by the Trades' Council, but the circular did not correctly state the facts. The Corporation have no information as to any connection between Messrs. White and Company and the British Electric Traction Company, and all dealings of the Corporation in reference to the purchase of the tramways were with the Cavehill and Whitewell Tramways Company alone. The Corporation do not know of any arrangements between Messrs. White and the said tramway company for the reconstruction of the line, but the cost of reconstruction and electrification has been estimated at over £40,000, in addition to the £13,523 paid for the old horse line. Two members of the council are shareholders in the Cavehill and Whitewell Tramways Company. One of them, Mr. Robert Dunlop, is a director of that company. Neither he nor the other shareholder took any part or voted in the council on the negotiations for the purchase by the Corporation. Mr. Nance was chairman of the Cavehill and Whitewell Tramways Company previous to 1904, but then resigned his chairmanship and parted with his shares, severing his connection with the company. The last balance sheet of the company showed the capital outlay on the old line as £13,523 odd, but did not state the traffic receipts for the 48 weeks ending 6th December last. When the line is worked by the Corporation, in conjunction with their own tramways, it is expected that there will be a considerable increase without corresponding additional outlay, and that the line will be a paying one." On 21st December last the Local Government Board gave their approval, under Section 5 of the Borough Funds Act, to the resolution of the Corporation proposing to apply the local funds or rates to the payment of costs and expenses attending the promotion of the Bill, no objection having been received within the time specified by Section 6 of the Act. At a later stage the Board will have to issue a certificate stating whether the application contained in the Bill is made with or without their sanction and approval. The matters referred to in the Question would be rather for the consideration of the Parliamentary Committee before whom the Bill may come than for the Board.

Condition of Belfast Summons Court.

MR. DEVLIN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether his attention has been called to the complaints of the magistrates, solicitors, and officials engaged in the Belfast Summons Court on the 29th January last, as to the insanitary condition of the court room, owing to improper ventilation and foul air; and whether, seeing that the condition of the court room has been the subject of frequent complaints, the Local Government Board for Ireland propose to take any action in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I am informed that the local authorities recently made a change in the mode of heating the Belfast Summons Court, and had electric fans introduced. It would appear that the court-keeper was not properly instructed in the use of the heating and ventilating appliances, but the matter has now been placed in charge of the superintendent of the fire brigade, and the Belfast Police Committee have expressed their desire to do whatever may be possible to remedy the matters complained of. The Local Government Board have received no complaints in the matter. If complaints should be made to them they are prepared to consider whether the matter is one in which they could take action under Article 15 (3) of The Application of Enactments Order, 1898.

Production and Imports of Flour and Wheat.

SIR H. COTTON (Nottingham, E.) To ask the President of the Board of Trade, whether he will grant the Return standing on to-day's Notices or give the information desired in any other convenient form.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The following statements give the information desired by my honourable friend:—

(a) Production of Wheat in the United Kingdom.

	1905.	1906.	1907.
	Cwts.	Cwts.	Cwts.
Estimated production of wheat in the United Kingdom -	32,321,066	32,474,164	30,284,567

(b) Imports of Wheat and Wheat Flour† into the United Kingdom.

	1905.	1906.	1907.*
Imports of wheat and wheat flour: †	Cwts.	Cwts.	Cwts.
From United States - -	14,531,114	36,114,886	33,647,669
,, Argentina - -	24,093,067	19,383,028	22,586,711
,, Russia - - -	24,858,568	15,074,461	10,900,300
,, India - - -	22,866,311	12,638,561	18,269,600
,, Canada - - -	8,369,391	13,824,283	15,022,367
,, Australia - - -	11,480,672	8,535,517	8,506,700
,, other Countries -	8,027,466	7,105,214	6,704,004
Total imports of wheat and wheat flour † - - -	114,226,589	112,675,950	115,637,351

* Provincial figures.
† Wheat flour has been converted into its estimated grain equivalent.

Re-direction of Letters.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH (Fermanagh, N.): To ask the Postmaster-General, why the Post Office at Belturbet, county Cavan, refuse to re-direct letters to the Rev. Mr. Beckett, Killinbere Rectory, Virginia, county Cavan, from his previous address at Belturbet, which he states he has permanently left; is it open to the local postmaster to decide that the reverend gentleman has only temporarily left Belturbet and to refuse on that ground, quoting from page 22 of the Postal Guide, when the reverend gentleman himself has written expressly that his change of address is permanent.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The Rev. Mr. Beckett's request for official re-direction was refused in the first instance because the landlady at his lodgings at Drumosladdy, Belturbet, was willing to re-direct his letters. The Post Office does not undertake the re-direction of correspondence addressed to lodgings when arrangements can be made for the re-direction to be performed at the place of address. It is understood, however, that the landlady has since refused to carry out the arrangement, and the circumstances seem to justify a relaxation of the rule in this case. Instructions have therefore been given for Mr. Beckett's letters to be re-directed at the Drumosladdy Post Office.

The Post Office and Press Telegrams.

MR. JOWETT (Bradford, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General, whether he appointed a Departmental Committee to investigate and report upon the complaints made by newspaper proprietors with regard to delays and errors in the transmission of Press messages over public wires; whether allegations were made that the Post Office had given preference to certain newspaper proprietors in regard to the leasing of telegraph wires, that enabled them to compete unfairly with newspapers in other adjacent towns; and whether, in view of the proposals made by the Departmental Committee, he will lay the Report upon the Table of this House.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) My reference to the Departmental Committee was not in the terms suggested by the hon. Member. I shall be glad to hand him a copy of the Report, with my Minute thereon, and will place copies in the Library, but I do not know that there would be any advantage in having it printed and circulated as a Parliamentary Paper.

Monaghan Agricultural School.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH: To ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland), whether he is aware that the Monaghan Agricultural School was, from 1902 to 1907, held under an agreement with the Christian Brothers made with the Department, and containing clauses providing for undenominational treatment of the students, and that the school was successful and well attended; and will he explain why the Department has now abandoned control of the school and no longer preserves its undenominational character, and thereby gravely imperils its being made available by students of different religious opinions.

(*Answered by Mr. T. W. Russell.*) Monaghan School of Agriculture was conducted from 1902 to 1907 under an agreement between the Christian Brothers and the Department. The agreement, which was for a period of five years, terminated on 31st March, 1907. The school is at present carried on under a scheme administered by the County Monaghan Committee of Agriculture. It is open to pupils of all religious denominations. The pupils were admitted to the present session, as in previous years, on the results of an entrance examination held by the Department's Inspector. The Department have not abandoned control of the school. They exercise the same control with regard to it as they do in the case of other agricultural schemes administered through County Committee of Agriculture. The Department do not regard the school as having been conducted satisfactorily. The attendance of pupils has been moderate.

Vaccination—Payments out of Rates.

MR. LUPTON (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): To ask the President of the Local Government Board, what amount of money was paid out of the rates for vaccination in the year 1906, and what amount was paid out of the rates for vaccination in the year 1907.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) Complete figures for the year ended March 1907, cannot yet be given. The following statement shows the amounts for the years ended March 1905 and 1906 respectively, and for the year ended March 1907, so far as the information is at present available :—

Year ended March.	Total Expenditure of Boards of Guardians on Vaccination.		
	London Unions.	Provincial Unions.	Total.
	£.	£.	£.
1905	33,908	241,920	275,828
1906	32,713	227,582	260,295
1907	31,200	Not yet ascertained.	—

Socialists' Meetings in Council Schools.

MR. GRAYSON (Yorkshire, W. R., Colne Valley): To ask the President of the Board of Education, whether he is aware that the Willesden Education Committee, the London County Council Education Committee, and other education committees forbid the use of rate-provided buildings to Socialists for the purpose of Socialist Sunday Schools; and, if so, whether he is prepared to take steps to amend the Code upon which this restriction is based.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The Code contains no regulations as to the letting of council school buildings outside school hours, and the Board of Education have no jurisdication either to authorise or to prohibit the restriction referred to.

Opium Sales.

SIR H. COTTON: To ask the Secretary of State for India, if he can state the average price per chest realised at the opium sales in Calcutta month by month from April to December, 1907, inclusive; and what was the estimate of the average price per chest in the Budget of the current year.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) The average price per chest realised at the monthly opium sales in Calcutta from April to December, 1907, was as follows :—

	Rupees.
April - - -	1,456
May - - -	1,412
June - - -	1,428
July - - -	1,329
August - -	1,313
September - -	1,290
October - -	1,408
November - -	1,340
December - -	1,277

The average price estimated in the Budget for 1907–8 was Rs. 1,250.

SIR H. COTTON: To ask the Secretary of State for India, if he can state the amount of Indian opium revenue realised during the first nine months of the current financial year, 1907–8, and the amount estimated for the whole year in the Budget.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) The gross amount of Indian opium revenue realised during the first eight months of the current financial year 1907–8 was £3,580,467, and the amount estimated for the whole year in the Budget was £4,851,100. Figures for nine months are not yet available.

Appointment of Colonel Giles to position of Principal Medical Officer, London Division Territorial Army.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is proposed to appoint Surgeon Lieutenant Colonel (Hon. Surgeon Colonel) P. B. Giles, one of the medical officers of the First Herefordshire Rifle Volunteers, to the office of principal medical officer of one of the London divisions of the Territorial Army, who does not reside in London; and, if any question of seniority of commission is concerned in the appointment, whether such a principle of selection has been adopted in connection with similar appointments to other divisions of the Territorial Army.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) It is proposed to appoint this officer as stated in the Question. He is Commandant of the Volunteer Ambulance School in London, an institution which has been most successful in training a large proportion of the Volunteer medical officers. He resides near London. Seniority was not the determining factor in selecting officers for the appointments mentioned in the Question; but those officers best fitted to carry out the work were chosen, seniority being given its due weight.

Sergeants' Messes in Provincial Towns.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for War, if he can state under what regulation sergeants of the permanent staff have a mess in a provincial town other than regimental quarters; and can civilians become honorary members.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The regulations do not contemplate the establishment of a sergeants' mess at a place away from the regimental headquarters, nor do they provide for civilians being made honorary members. If the honourable Member will specify any case in which the regulations have been infringed, inquiry will be made.

Strength of the Royal Horse and Field Artillery.

Mr. PIKE PEASE (Darlington): To ask the Secretary of State for War, what was the number of officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of the Royal Horse and Field Artillery serving with the colours, on the 1st October, 1905, and 1st February, 1908, respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The figures for the 1st October, 1905, and 1st January, 1908, are as follows (figures for 1st February, 1908, not yet being available)—

Date.	Officers.	Warrant Officers.	Sergeants.	Trumpeters.	Rank and File.	Total.
1st October, 1905 -	1,126	61	1,873	407	27,083	30,550
1st January, 1908 -	1,083	61	1,801	391	27,379	30,715

Strength of the Brigade of Guards.

Mr. PIKE PEASE: To ask the Secretary of State for War, what was the number of officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of the Brigade of Guards serving with the colours on the 1st October, 1905, and 1st October, 1907 respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The figures are as follows—

Date.	Officers.	Warrant Officers.	Sergeants.	Drummers.	Rank and File.	Total.
1st October, 1905 -	305	18	469	185	7,076	8,053
1st October, 1907 -	284	16	439	162	6,610	7,511

ELECTIONS AND REGISTRATION (LONDON) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

*MR. DICKINSON (St. Pancras, N.) in moving the Second Reading of the Elections and Registration (London) Bill, said he would like, first of all, to explain the reason of the extremely short time given to the House in which to consider the provisions of the Bill previous to its coming on for discussion. A fortnight ago he had no idea at all that he would be called upon to move this Bill on that particular day, and in the ordinary course of procedure, he least of all expected that by the fortune of the ballot its introduction would be so early. However, the fortunes of the ballot had given him the opportunity of which he had availed himself, although he would have wished that the House could have had more time to consider the measure. But he had done all he could to put hon. Members in possession of the Bill, and by the courtesy of the officers of the House, arrangements were made by which the Bill was placed in the hands of Members twenty-four hours earlier than it would have arrived in the ordinary course. No one recognised more than he did that any Bill of this kind, dealing with registration reform must raise so many complicated issues, that it was quite impossible for anyone to think that, however carefully prepared, it was not open to amendment and legitimate criticism. So far as the Members representing London were concerned, they were only too anxious that the fullest consideration should be given to what was suggested by the measure, and certainly they would not hesitate to consider any proposal from any quarter of the House for the amendment of its provisions. It was perhaps necessary in the circumstances that he should give more time than he had intended to an explanation of the leading features of the Bill. The object of the measure was to enable the electors of London, who had the proper qualifications laid down by Parliament, to be put upon the lists and to record their votes, and he could not help thinking that this proposition was one that would command the assent of both sides of the House. He did not believe that there was any Member of the House who did not desire that every facility should be given to people, who were otherwise properly qualified and entitled to vote, to be put on the register and so enabled to record their voice in connection with the affairs of the nation. If that principle were granted, he could not but think that many hon. Members opposite would give the Bill their support. With several of them he had worked for years—in opposite political camps it was true, but with the same object in view, namely, the benefit of the people of London. He hoped, therefore, that they would co-operate with him in the discussion of the details of the Bill. He did not wish to anticipate objections needlessly, but there was one main objection to the measure to which he felt bound to refer, namely, that it was not right to deal with one particular area separately from that of the whole country. That he admitted at once was a valid objection, since it was undoubtedly expedient that the election of the Parliament of this country should as far as possible be effected on a uniform system. But even if it could not be shown that there were reasons why London should have special treatment—though he thought that he would be able to prove to the House that there were such reasons—still, if there were amendments of local machinery which would enable a better record of the wishes of the people to be obtained, then, he submitted, there was no reason why they should not make some such alteration in a place like London, even if it did not apply to the rest of the country. But he thought that he would be able to convince the House that on this subject London held a very peculiar position, and was really entitled to special treatment. There was one very remarkable fact in the case of the Metropolis, and it was that the number of voters on the lists in proportion to the entire population was far smaller than in the rest of the country. In London the number of electors per 1,000 of male adults of the population, was 539, whereas the proportion in the country at the same period was 671, a difference of 132. Calculating this out, he found that if the number of electors per 1,000 male adults were the same as in the country, the result would be that there would be an addition of 168,000 persons to the London electorate. This was an extraordinary figure, and he did not want to place his argument upon it too high, because there were many reasons that might bring about this result. The social habits of the people, the constant coming in and out of London, and the migratory life of many Londoners, all rendered it inevitable that there should be a smaller proportion of electors on the lists than in other parts of the country, where residence was generally more permanent. At the same time he thought he was justified in saying that in London there were scores of thousands of persons whose names ought to be recorded on the list of electors, but who were kept off the registers by reason of some technical detail or difficulty, such as those which it was the object of this Bill to remove, and he asked the House to consider whether some legislation could not be passed to rectify this anomaly. Apart from the social habits of the people of London, there were two main facts which accounted for a considerable proportion of the difference to which he had referred. First of all, there was the fact that Londoners when changing their residence in London often moved from one Parliamentary borough to another; and, secondly, there was the fact that the system of registration was not sufficiently efficacious to get the names of all electors on to the register who were otherwise entitled to be placed on it. From what he had heard from registration agents and others, he claimed that he was within the mark when he said that, in every twelve months, at least 20 per cent. of the electors changed their abode. He was purposely putting the figures low. Many of those who moved from one place to another thereby lost their right to vote. The House would readily understand why this was. When the voter moved from one borough in London to another he lost the vote for the borough he had left and a year, and sometimes two years, elapsed before he got a vote for the borough to which he had moved. He wished to make it clear that this Bill dealt with Parliamentary boroughs, and not municipal boroughs. In London there were twenty-eight Parliamentary boroughs and twenty-nine municipal or metropolitan boroughs, including the city. It happened that the number of metropolitan boroughs was nearly approximate to the number of Parliamentary boroughs, but they did not coincide. For instance, the Parliamentary borough of the Tower Hamlets included two municipal boroughs, whereas the Westminster municipal borough included three Parliamentary boroughs. Although in some cases the areas were fairly approximate, still, as a matter of fact, there was not one single metropolitan borough that was exactly coterminous with the Parliamentary borough. The consequence of that was that they had two distinct registers of electors, and the difficulties arising from that were very great. It was impossible to state the number of voters affected in this manner. In his own constituency last year, 330 removals were actually traced to other Parliamentary boroughs in London, and if that figure was applied to London as a whole there must be at least 25,000 or 30,000 persons who lost their votes simply by reason of the fact that they moved from one house to another. The number was probably much greater, but he was anxious not to put the case too high. This did not hold good elsewhere. Ever since the Reform Act of 1832 it was laid down that it was not necessary to occupy the same premises in a borough during the whole twelve months, but it would be sufficient to occupy different premises in immediate succession in the same borough, and in almost every town in the Kingdom a person could move freely from one house to another, and yet retain his right to vote. In this respect London ought to be placed in the same position as other cities, and he asked those who were opposing the Bill whether they really had considered that in so doing they were refusing to Londoners a right which Parliament had given to everybody else. These facts justified him in asking the House to give special consideration to London, because it occupied this special position. The Bill proposed a very simple remedy. It proposed to make London, not twenty-eight Parliamentary boroughs, but one Parliamentary borough and that would bring about the alteration of the law as regarded successive occupation which he had advocated. It would also have some other important results, one being that it would affect the position of the plural voter. In London, the plural voter flourished like a green bay tree. Not only was the climate eminently suitable, but the ground was laid out expressly for him, and there was no difficulty on the part of a man who had a business that extended all over London in having and exercising twenty-eight votes. He shrewdly suspected that one of the reasons for the Amendment of the hon. Baronet the Member for the City of London, was that he realised that his constituency would be affected by this alteration in the law. He believed that no fewer than 12,000 of the electors who so wisely returned the hon. Baronet to Parliament had duplicate votes somewhere else. In London, it was found, not long ago, in going through the register that there were no fewer than 60,000 electors who had duplicate votes somewhere or another, and, of these, 36,000 had duplicate qualifications within London, This condition of affairs did not hold good in any other city. Ever since 1878 it had been abolished in other towns, and it had now been made the duty of the revising barrister, where he found that a person had more than one qualification in any borough, to put him down for one qualification, and to remove his name from the Parliamentary Register in respect of all the other qualifications. So far as Parliamentary representation went he had only the right to his one vote. In the same way he asked why not do the same for London. There were other results that flowed from this change, but they were matters for discussion in Committee. There were, however, a few leading points that he hoped he might present to hon. Members. One result of making London one borough was that there must be one returning officer, and the Bill proposed the Clerk to the London County Council, though he was open to consider other suggestions. At present there were two officials concerned with elections in London, the sheriff of the City in the City of London and the sheriff of the county in the county of London. The latter appointed the returning officers for Parliamentary elections outside the City and in doing so it had been his practice to select persons who were not particularly connected with the local administration of London. In six instances he had appointed as returning officers town clerks of Metropolitan boroughs, and in twenty-one instances he had selected other persons. The result of this, in his opinion, was not good and certainly not cheap. The London County Council elections were conducted on almost exactly the same lines as Parliamentary elections. The only difference as far as he knew was that whereas there were some 600,000 electors for Parliament, there were 800,000 for the county council. The system that had been adopted for the county council elections had been that the Clerk of the Council, whose jurisdiction ran all over London, including the City, was the returning officer, and he had made use of the services of the town clerks in the various Metropolitan boroughs with very good and cheap results. He found that the cost of the County Council elections was nearly 25 per cent. less than the cost of the Parliamentary elections. It was clear then that the system under which the present returning officers carried on their elections was unnecessarily expensive. The Bill had a provision which would alter the law in London as regarded the hours of polling. That he had no doubt, would provoke the criticism that the hours ought not to vary as between London and the rest of the country. But London suffered in a very special manner through the early closing of the poll. London differed from other urban constituencies by the long distances that people had to go to their work. It also differed very largely in the late hours that they worked. He did not know whether people realised the long time that Londoners were away from their homes. Thousands of working men for five days in the week were not near their homes between eight in the morning and eight in the evening and these people were debarred from exercising their voice in the affairs of the nation because the poll was fixed from eight to eight. An experiment had been tried under the regulations of the Local Government Board in relation to the guardians elections. The time had been extended to ten o'clock, and with very good results. In Bethnal Green it was found that 36 per cent. of the voters voted after eight o'clock at night, and he held that the same thing would happen with regard to Parliamentary elections, so that by extending the hours they would bring a great many more people to the poll. It was not merely that voters preferred to go late. Londoners were very late people. They only had their leisure at night. London was really a city of the night, and he asked that the circumstances of London should be borne in mind in deciding this question. He would add that the opinion of Londoners generally was in favour of the change. When the views of the Metropolitan borough councils were asked for upon this subject, nineteen of them approved, six disapproved, and six took no action. Therefore he considered that he was justified in saying that there was a general desire to have this extension granted in regard to polling hours. His last point was with regard to registration. He thought that a very large proportion of the discrepancy between London and the rest of the country to which he had already alluded was due to the inefficient system of registration. In view of the peculiar circumstances of municipal government in London, if it could be proved that a rather different system of registration in London would bring about the result they all desired, viz., a fuller representation of qualified electors, he contended that the House was entitled to differentiate London from the rest of the country. This part of the subject was so complex that he appealed to the House to allow it to be discussed in Committee. Time did not permit him to attempt to make it clear to-day, and he felt sure that all hon. Members would understand that a subject involving the consideration of many Statutes ought to be discussed in Commitee upstairs. He might say, however, that the main principle underlying the registration clauses was so to improve the system of registration that the officers concerned might be able to bring about better results. The present system in London brought about very bad results indeed. In his own constituency last year on a register containing 9,000 names no less than 3,000 corrections had to be made. He did not think that state of things held good in other parts of the country. The present system was that the town clerk issued a notice to the landlord and asked him to make a return as to the people living in his house. The landlord often confused it with the Census and consequently sent a list of all kinds of people, and they were put right on to the register. The register in his own constituency contained the names of children of fourteen years of age, of domestic servants, and even of working men employed by the owner of the house, and this kind of thing occurred because the owner of the house did not understand registration law, and was not in a position to make proper returns. If they wanted to get a correct register they could only do it by a house to house canvass. The Leader of the Opposition in the year 1899 tried to remedy this state of affairs, and he did so to a certain extent. Instead of making the overseers responsible, as elsewhere, for the lists he put the town clerks in that position, and this created a better system than that which existed previously. But the town clerk was not really given the power he ought to have, and the object of this clause was to give town clerks in Metropolitan boroughs much greater powers and place upon them a much more serious responsibility. He trusted the House would pass the Second Reading of this Bill, and so allow the subject to be discussed in Committee. It might be said that England wanted this measure as well as London, and that, therefore, London ought to wait until the subject was dealt with for the entire country. He would, however, ask hon. Members to allow London Members to set their own house in order. This was only one of the items of reform required in connection with London government. The London Members might have brought forward a larger scheme, but they had recognised fully the limitations upon Bills promoted by private Members. That was the reason they submitted this small measure. It was a small thing, but it was their own, and he hoped the House would enable those who represented

London constituencies to show that they were both willing and able to do something for the great city which they served.

LORD R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.) said that by Clause 5 it was proposed to provide: "That the revising barrister should be appointed by the Lord Chief Justice of England." The same clause also gave power to His Majesty's Government in Council to make provision with regard to the number of revising barristers. At the present time there were no revising barristers for the Parliamentary Borough of London because there was no such Parliamentary borough, so these would all have to be new officials. The actual number of revising barristers might be increased indefinitely, and from the other provisions of the Bill it was plain that the number would have to be increased considerably to carry out this measure. What were the revising barristers going to be? He submitted that they were to be officials with existing statutory rights and powers, privileges and duties, because, otherwise they would have no means of carrying out the duties thrown on them by this Bill. All the existing statutes must apply to these barristers; otherwise they could not possibly revise the list. Provision with respect to the payment of these barristers would have to be made. Under Section 9 of the County Electors Act of 1888 it was provided that each revising barrister should receive £250 a year, half of which was to come from the Treasury, and that would be a charge upon the taxpayers of the country. He submitted that the effect of Clause 5 must be to throw a new charge upon the taxpayers of the country, and the rule in regard to such a financial proposal was well known. That rule was that a new charge could not be proposed without the recommendation of the Crown, and it had to originate in a Committee of this House. Therefore if this was a money Bill it could not be proceeded with at all. If there was a clause in a Bill which increased the charge on the taxpayers, the common practice was to leave out that clause and have it presented to the House later on upon the recommendation of the Crown, in order that the usual constitutional safeguards might be carried out. In this particular case this clause was part of the Bill before the House, and the ordinary procedure had not been followed. He submitted that if the Question before the House was: "That this Bill be now read a second time," that would involve putting the Question: "That this clause be read a second time," and that could not be done without a recommendation of the Crown or the usual step taken in Committee of the whole House. He submitted that Clause 5 did create a new charge upon the taxpayers of the country, and as that clause was an integral part of this Bill no Question which involved the adoption of that clause could be put.

MR. SPEAKER: If the main purpose of this Bill was to throw a charge upon the ratepayers it is quite clear that the Motion for the Second Reading could not be made. I do not, however, think the character of this Bill can be described as being a money Bill. The charge, if there is any charge at all, is merely an incidental one, and it very often happens that the Second Reading is put when there is one particular clause which creates a charge which is really only incidental to the main purpose of the Bill. In a case of that sort in Committee when the clause is reached the Chairman will not put the Question until a Resolution is before him, which has to be adopted by this House, accepting the charge. The noble Lord suggests that Clause 5 imposes a charge, but I do not think it does and I do not read the words of Clause 5 as imposing any charge. It says—

> "The revising barristers for the parliamentary borough of London shall be appointed by the Lord Chief Justice of England.
>
> His Majesty, by Order in Council, may make regulations with respect to the number of revising barristers to be appointed and the divisions of the borough for which they shall be appointed."

There is no charge imposed there, but the noble Lord, I suppose, argues that incidentally there must be a charge, because no barrister would act without receiving remuneration. If there is no charge imposed, this clause cannot impose any charge, and if there is no means by any other process—by any former Acts—to provide remuneration for the barristers, then this clause would be inoperative. If there is any other means for providing the amount of remuneration which they will deserve, and which they will earn, it is not necessary to insert it in this Bill. I would not like to say whether there is or is not outside this Bill any means by which the revising barristers appointed under the Bill can receive remuneration, but under the circumstances I see no objection to the Bill proceeding.

Mr. CORRIE GRANT (Warwickshire, Rugby) formally seconded the Second Reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Dickinson.*)

Sir F. BANBURY (City of London) moved an Amendment asking the House to decline to proceed with a Bill which turned a county into a borough, altered the franchise, the electoral boundaries, and the hours of polling in one part of the country without regard to the rest of the United Kingdom, and which did not deal with the question of redistribution. So far as he could gather from Mr. Speaker's ruling Clause 5 would be inoperative. He thought he would be able to show to the House that in all probability a great part of the Bill would be inoperative. [An Hon. Member: Why are you afraid of it?] The hon. Member was mistaken; the hon. Gentlemen who were introducing the Bill were afraid. They had seen the writing on the wall. They had noticed the results of the elections at Mid Devon and Hereford, and now they were going to gerrymander London, so as to ensure the greater probability of the return of Members to their own side of the House. The Second Reading had been moved in an extremely moderate speech. Anyone listening to that speech would have thought that this was a small Bill to give a little advantage to registration agents, town clerks, or borough council clerks, in that they would not have so much trouble in putting electors on the register, and that generally nothing serious would happen, as all desired that those who had a right to vote should be on the register. In opening his speech, it was true, the hon. Member gave an explanation as to the shortness of the time which hon. Members had had to examine the Bill; he attributed that to the fortunes of the ballot box. If the system of registration proposed by the Bill was good for London, it was good for the whole of the country. If that was so, there could be no object in introducing a piecemeal system for part of the United Kingdom. As to the explanation that it was owing to the fortunes of the ballot box that the hon. Member was placed to-day in the position of having to move the Second Reading, he would point out that the Bill was No. 13. How was it that the hon. Member had taken the first place on the first Friday available for private Members' Bills? The hon. Member, no doubt, was an extremely far-seeing man, but he was not gifted with the power of prophecy. When the Bill was put down for this Friday, how did he know that the debate on the Address would be closured by the Government last night? He would like to ask the hon. Member what took place when a deputation of London Liberal Members waited on the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Was it arranged between the London Liberal Members and the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the right hon. Gentleman should move the closure at half-past eleven last night? That was a most unusual thing to do when the Address had only been discussed seven days. That seemed to him to be one of the reasons why the hon. Member was so fortunate. He would suggest that his right hon. friend the Member for Wimbledon, if he took part in the debate, should ask the Government whether they intended to take up this Bill and make it their own. It would not be the first time that such a thing had been done, and after what happened last night he was not at all sure that it was not going to be done again.

*The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. John Burns, Battersea): I did the same thing with hon. Members' Bills last year and the year before.

Sir F. BANBURY said that that was his point. The Government had taken advantage of the forms of the House which enabled private Members to bring forward Bills on Fridays in order to take over the Bills and so avoid the difficulties of procedure which might otherwise have occurred. [An Hon. Member: Why not?] It was evident why not. A Government Bill would not be brought in on Friday when a great many Members were out of town or absent for other reasons; it would have been brought in on a Government day when the House was full. It was evident to anybody who had been any length of time in the House that this method of procedure was of great advantage to the Government, but whether it was of equal advantage to the country was quite another matter. They were told that this Bill would only make a slight alteration, but as a matter of fact it was a disfranchising Bill. [A Liberal Member: Hear, hear!] That was cheered by the hon. Member opposite. The sole object of the Liberal Party for years in dealing with the franchise had been to extend it, but it appeared from that cheer there was one Member of the Party who wished to take away the franchise from people who now had it. The number of electors entitled to exercise the Parliamentary franchise in London was 686,000. The hon. Member opposite said that there were 60,000 voters in London who had plural qualifications. If that was so, why should they be disfranchised? If these electors did not vote against the hon. Members and his friends, the House would not have heard of this Bill to-day. The hon. Member said it was quite wrong that voters should have plural qualifications. Why was a man able to vote twice? It was because he was a hard-working, thrifty, and industrious person. Having a place of business in one place, he was able to live in another part of London. These men were the very *élite* of London or of the country; they were the people one ought to encourage. If they happened to be Tories, it only showed that they regarded Tory principles as right. There was no question of redistribution in this Bill. Unless he was very much mistaken, the number of electors in St. George's-in-the-East was 3,800 and in Wandsworth 38,000. Did the President of the Local Government Board say that there was no inequality in giving a Member to 3,800 in the one case and only one to 38,000 in the other? Talk about plural voting! When they came to consider the difference between 3,800 and 38,000 there was plural voting with a vengeance. A curious side-light was thrown on this question by the debate on the Franchise Act of 1885. In November, 1884, the late Sir Stafford Northcote quoted a statement by Mr. Labouchere—and nobody would deny that Mr. Labouchere was an ardent Liberal—he thought that was the proper way to describe him—as saying that irrespective of Party tactics it was unquestionable that the reduction of the franchise and redistribution should go together. Party tactics, and Party tactics only, were at the bottom of this Bill. The Bill had been brought in at forty-eight hours notice—far too short notice for a Bill affecting 686,000 electors. Moreover, it was brought in by a private Member. The President of the Local Government Board was a London Member and had had great experience in all these questions, and he asked the hon. Gentleman if a Bill dealing with the franchise had not always been introduced by the Government of the day after mature consideration and deliberation? Besides, everybody should be allowed time to form their own opinion on the provisions of the Bill. But here they were confronted, on forty-eight hours notice, with a Bill brought in by a private Member—very distinguished, no doubt—and he contended that such a procedure was absolutely wrong. The number of voters affected by the Bill ought also to be remembered. These were not all rich men and property owners who were regarded as the very worst description of voters by hon. Members opposite. A tradesman who did not live over his shop would be disfranchised by the Bill. He was informed that it was not uncommon for three or four skilled artisans to combine and take a workshop in the City of London. Each of the partners now had a vote for the warehouse and also one for the house if he lived, say, in Wandsworth or Peckham; but if he lived at Hendon he would not be disfranchised. Was it possible that a Bill containing such a ridiculous proposition as that could be passed even by this House of Commons? Fortunately the Bill dealing with another place was still in the minds of the Government, and he thought it would be in the minds of the Government for a considerable length of time. There was still another House of Parliament which would have to be considered by the promoters of this Bill, and they would have something to say upon it. It was asked why should London be treated differently from other towns. First of all, because London was a county and not a borough; and why should a county be converted into a borough merely to suit the hon. Member? With regard to other towns, he would point out that in 1885 the Radical Government settled all that question. They picked out—he was only dealing with England—certain towns and made them into boroughs and divided them into divisions. All these questions about moving and registration were only applicable to boroughs which were divided into Parliamentary divisions. The distinction did not apply to the counties. Thirteen of these provincial towns were constituted by the Radical Government of the day into Parliamentary boroughs. Taking them all together they had a population of 4,273,624 and they returned fifty-five members. Their population varied from 128,000 to upwards of 500,000. Birmingham had a population of 522,204 and returned seven Members. Liverpool had a population of 626,634 and returned nine Members. Did anybody mean to tell him that there was any resemblance between places like Salford with a population of 220,957 and London with its population of 4,543,436? Islington alone had a population of 335,000. Really he was ashamed that an hon. Member who said he was a London man and was a member of the London County Council, should compare such towns with London and say that London ought to be treated in the same way! Manchester had a population of 475,356 and returned six Members; Salford had three Members with a population of 220,957, but there was nothing to prevent a man from voting in Salford and also in Manchester. He thought he had demolished the contention of the hon. Gentleman in his comparison between London and various provincial towns and cities. Moreover, London was not one city. It was an aggregation of a variety of boroughs and cities. These, owing to certain circumstances, had grown in size until they had become this enormous London. But the interests in them were not identical. Hackney had not the same interests as Wandsworth; certainly the interests were not identical; and that was why this Bill was a wrong Bill. These different boroughs and cities were not animated with the same political feeling and their local circumstances were in no way alike. He did not intend to deal with the Bill clause by clause; but it was a very extraordinary thing that all the machinery of the Bill was to be settled by an Order in Council, which would be the work of the Executive Government. Why was that? When they were dealing with extremely important questions affecting 680,000 electors, who should know what was going to be done? The hon. Gentleman said that that matter could be discussed in the quiet of the Committee upstairs, but he would remind the hon. Gentleman that there were no reporters present upstairs, which reminded him of a passage in the election address of the Prime Minister, to the effect that the late Government had curtailed the freedom of discussion in the House of Commons, by closuring the Address at half-past eleven o'clock on a very early day to allow a Bill to be brought in, thus impairing its authority and reducing the Legislature as far as they could to a machine for registering the decrees of the Executive. He wondered whether the President of the Board of Education read that and founded his action upon it in view of the second order on the Paper; he would think that that had very likely taken place. Now, the Government were going to crown that achievement by providing in this Bill, that by an Order in Council they were to register a decree as to how all the machinery of the measure was to be framed. They had last night a speech by an hon. Gentleman opposite who wanted to create a new Department; why not create another new Department—a Star Chamber—and make the President of the Board of Education the President of that and refer everything to it. It would save a great deal of time and nobody would know anything about it until the decree was published, and then they would have to submit

This was called Radical freedom. What was it that was to be referred to an Order in Council? Supposing one of the misguided people dealt with by the Bill had a vote in the City of London and another in Wandsworth, was the Order in Council to settle which vote that person was to be allowed to exercise? When the First Commissioner of Works brought in his Plural Voting Bill—and here he might say that that was a Bill brought in by a Member of the Government—he wished to enact that any plural voter who voted in more than one place should be punished by two years hard labour. The force of opinion in the House and in the country was so great that the hon. Member had to withdraw that provision. Did the hon. Member who brought in this Bill intend that the Order in Council should provide that a man who had votes in the City of London and in Wandsworth, and knowing nothing of the Order in Council voted in both places, was to have two years hard labour? If not, why not, and how did they know what was going to be provided under the Order in Council? Unless he was very much mistaken it was generally the habit to put in a Bill that an Order in Council should lie upon the Table of the House for fourteen days, but even that provision was not put into this Bill. For himself, he did not attach very great importance to that provision, because, owing to the rules of the House, it was exceedingly difficult to find an opportunity of discussing these Orders, or to know when these Orders in Council had been brought in and laid on the Table. All he wished to point out, however, was that the hon. Member had not provided that safeguard. Everything was to be left to the Order in Council or to the Clerk of the London County Council. It appeared that the Clerk to the County Council was to be the person who was to prepare for the different parts of London a list of the different people, and he believed that there were some 3,000 lists and some 60,000 people with plural votes. It was very hard on the Clerk to the London County Council to have to examine all these papers. When he saw "William Smith, Peckham Rye," and "William Smith, Acacia Avenue, Wandsworth," how was he to know whether those two names represented more than one person? All Radical measures involved the spending of money, as this would do and yet they were the Party who came in pledged to economy. Every Bill they brought in added to the cost of the nation, increased the burden on the ratepayers. The Clerk to the County Council was to provide the money to do this work out of the rates, and that was very nice for the ratepayers. In order that a ratepayer in different boroughs, if he had a vote in each of them, should not exercise it detrimentally to the county council, it was to be taken away from him in all save one. How could a man's name be "starred" under these circumstances? It seemed to him impossible that such a thing could be done, and if it was possible how was notice to be given to a man that he was "starred?" [AN HON. MEMBER: It is done already.] That was so to a certain extent, but it was done in a very different case, and only in one borough. He had had the honour of sitting for the Peckham Division of Camberwell for thirteen and a half years, and Camberwell was a case in point. Camberwell was one borough divided into three Parliamentary divisions, and a person who had a qualification in Dulwich and Peckham could only vote in one place, and was generally "starred" by the revising barrister if the voter did not attend and say he wished to vote in one particular place. What was the result of that, and what might occur under this Bill? Very seldom did people who had two qualifications attend at the court and say in which place they wished to vote, and many of them did not find it out, until the day of election. Then they came to him and said: "I am 'starred' in Dulwich, I wish I had known before, and I would have been 'starred' in Peckham." Dulwich was a safe Conservative seat, whereas Peckham was a doubtful one. But all this was to be settled by the Clerk to the London County Council, who was to say whether a voter was to vote in the City of London, where his vote was not wanted, or in Peckham, where his vote was wanted. What about gerrymandering? This was what caused him to state that this Bill was to gerrymander the voting of London in the interest of one Party. Under the Bill the hours of polling, in London of all places, were to be altered. Why did he say in London of all places? Because there was not a single voter who had not a polling booth within a mile of where he resided, and in the country a voter often resided six or seven miles from one. If the extension of the hours was necessary in London, it was ten times more necessary in the country. There were, moreover, no electric trams in the country, and the voter had often to walk an hour or an hour and a half to the poll. In these circumstances it was idle to say that there was a demand in London for an extension of hours which did not exist in the country as well. Of course some voters would vote after eight o'clock, but as the House knew, there were always a number of people who were late for everything. If the promoters carried this Bill there would be a certain number of people who would arrive at five minutes past ten o'clock, and if they were going to alter the hours of polling so that nobody ever could be late, they would have to extend the period for a fortnight or three weeks, and then they would not succeed. He believed he was right in saying that the election of guardians was conducted on this principle, and the hours of polling were lengthened, but between eight and ten in the evening the persons in the polling booth for most of the time consisted of two policemen, the presiding officer, and the clerk. The principle was ridiculous, and he did not see why they should change the hours in London if they did not change them in the country. He did not say that the extension of the hours would lead to unpleasant tumults, but it was calculated to do that if it was calculated to do anything. Then there was the question of the alteration of the date of the registers coming into force. If this Bill became law and a general election took place in November or December, in London the voters on the new register would vote, but in the country the voters on the old register would do so. Was it conceivable that it was proposed to deal in this kind of way with so important a matter as the franchise? Why in the country should a person be only able to vote on the new register when an election took place in January whereas in London a voter could vote on the new register if an election took place in November? The whole thing was absolutely absurd and would not stand argument for one moment. Again, there was the question of boundaries: under this Bill the Executive by an Order in Council and the President of the Star Chamber could enlarge the Parliamentary boroughs of London. His hon. friend who sat for Wandsworth had already 38,000 electors to represent, but the Bill provided that the Parliamentary area might be made coterminous with the administrative county of London. The administrative county of London was larger than the Parliamentary area of London, but there was not power to increase the number of Members of Parliament although a number of voters were to be added to constituencies. Thus his hon. friend who represented most worthily 38,000 people would probably represent 50,000, and it was evident that it was thought that one Tory Member was quite good enough for 50,000 electors, in fact if one could make it 60,000 it would be a great deal better. The result would be that the numbers of people returning Members of Parliament would be largely increased at the will of the Executive by an Order in Council. It seemed to him that that was an extremely large order, instead of being as the hon. Member said a slight alteration in a place like London. All he could say was that the hon. Member's view of the word "slight" was not his interpretation, and he ventured to say it would not be that of the majority of the electors of the country. The hon. Member a short time ago was a distinguished member of the London County Council, but he believed, unfortunately for that body, he was no longer a member. Was he sure that that body approved of this Bill? Unless he was very much mistaken, the London County Council viewed its scope with great apprehension. Owing to the short time the Bill had been before the country it had been impossible for the County Council to take a vote upon it, but in a very short time he believed they would see when the County Council discussed the Bill and divided upon it, that they very much disapproved of the Bill. He earnestly entreated the House, if they were desirous of altering the franchise, to let it be done by a well considered and digested measure brought in by the Government of the day, and dealing with the whole of the country, and not to do it by such a Bill as this brought in on a Friday.

*MR. RAPHAEL (Derbyshire, S.) said it was not very often that he found himself in agreement with the hon. Baronet who moved this Amendment, and on this occasion he must dissociate himself from many of the arguments and statements of the hon. Gentleman. He could not accept the criticism of the hon. Gentleman on his colleagues, or admit that there was the shadow of foundation for the suggestion that there was any attempt in this Bill at gerrymandering for political purposes. He took a broader view of the Bill. He quite recognised the many absurdities and anomalies that existed in our franchise laws at the present time, but one of the arguments of the hon. Gentleman had no terrors with him. The hon. Baronet said that people would be disfranchised by this Bill. He would not object to see people who had no right to vote disfranchised, but he would not like to see them disfranchised in London alone whereas under this Bill they would retain their votes in every other part of the country. The great objection he saw to the Bill was that it attempted to alter the law of the land, and apply that alteration to only one-eighth of the constituencies of the country. He did not see why, if there was to be successive occupation from borough to borough, they should not have successive occupation from one portion of a county to another or from county to county. His constituency was surrounded by portions of another county, and there was just as much freedom of movement between the two counties as between the boroughs of London, and he was of opinion that if there was to be successive occupation the principle should apply to the whole country, and not to a part. He did not like to go counter to his Party in this matter, but he believed the hon. Member who brought in the Bill would have been well advised to have brought in a Bill to apply to the whole of the country. It would have been just as easy, and he thought the hon. Member would have had a better prospect of passing it into law, because there would have been the chance of the Government taking up the Bill. It was on the ground of general principle that he opposed the Bill. He hoped his hon. friend would not proceed with it, but would withdraw it, and bring in one applying the principle to the whole country.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'that,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'this House declines to proceed with a Bill which turns a county into a borough, alters the franchise, the electoral boundaries, and the hours of polling in one part of the country without regard to the rest of the United Kingdom, and which does not deal with the question of redistribution.'"—(*Sir Frederick Banbury.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

*MR. WOOD (Glasgow, St. Rollox) said the reasons of the hon. Member who had just sat down for seconding the rejection of this Bill seemed to be somewhat curious. His first was that he did not think the Bill would pass, and therefore he assisted it to its death, and the second was that he thought the principle of successive occupation should be largely extended throughout the country. Surely that was no reason why the successive occupation which already existed in other large towns should not be extended to London. He would with all respect pass from the speech of his hon. friend and deal with that of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of London, some parts of which he enjoyed immensely. He would never forget the definition of the plural voter. In his experience the plural voter was generally a person who was the "son of his father," and was not a person who attained his position by work and the exercise of that quality of thrift of which the hon. Member spoke. The whole burden of the opposition of the hon. Member seemed to rest on Committee points. For example, take the question of Orders in Council. What were those Orders? What were they to affect? They were to affect the question of small fringes which had already been dealt with for municipal purposes by the late Government, and were now to be dealt with for political purposes. To talk of the Star Chamber with regard to such powers savoured of exaggeration. Two points were raised by the hon. Baronet. He told the House that no one wanted to vote between eight and ten at night; but in Bethnal Green it was found that one-third of all the votes polled at the guardians' election were polled between those hours. In Glasgow the audience desired the termination of a political meeting at 9.45 p.m., but was willing to come early. In London in working class constituencies an audience could not be got together before 8.30, and there were thousands of working-men in London who could not possibly record their vote between the hours of eight in the morning and eight in the evening. That was true of some other centres of population, but it was not true of any one of them to the extent to which it was true of London. That was one case where it was fair to differentiate in the case of London. But the great objection of the hon. Member was its effect on the plural vote, and, resting upon that, he called this a disfranchising Bill. But the House would see that it was really an enfranchising Bill. It enfranchised about 50,000 people and did not deprive any person of a right to record his vote once, though it would deprive a person of the opportunity of recording a vote several times. To call it a disfranchising Bill was an abuse of terms. The objections taken by the mover and seconder of the Amendment would not stand examination for a moment. This Bill was to assimilate the practice of London with the practice in other large towns with regard to successive occupation. It was an attempt to give to London electors the same rights as were enjoyed by the electors of Manchester. It was desirable that the question of plural voting should be dealt with by a general measure, but that was no sufficient objection to the limited proposal of this Bill. Surely hon. Members would not oppose successive occupation. It was perfectly idle for the House to disguise from itself the fact that the real objection to this Bill by the mover of the rejection was based on the idea that the political party of which he was a member would lose by the reduction of the plural vote. He was much interested to see the anxiety of the hon. Member to know the opinion of the London County Council on this matter. He had not always shown the same anxiety for their opinion. But what had the London County Council to do with this Bill? They had been accused of claiming a great deal for the London County Council, but they had never claimed that it had any right to interfere in regard to Parliamentary franchise. The hon. Member asked why it was that the hon. Member for North St. Pancras introduced this Bill at the time he did. It was because the hon. Member had shown remarkable prescience. As a matter of fact he knew very well there was a feeling in the House that the debate on the Speech from the Throne ought not to be protracted too long, and that it was quite possible it might come to an end before Friday. So he took his chance and put down the Bill for that day. That was the whole truth of the matter. He thought that, after the extremely able way in which the provisions of the Bill had been explained to the House by his hon. friend, it would be useless for him to go into details. It was obvious there were matters which would have to be discussed in Committee, but as to the main principle of the measure he would like to impress upon the House that the object was to give the electors of London some advantages which were already enjoyed by the electors of other great towns in this country.

*EARL PERCY (Kensington, S.): I desire in a very few sentences to state the reasons why I intend to vote against the Second Reading of this Bill. In the preamble it is described as one primarily and practically exclusively affecting London, dealing with only a very small part of the questions concerning the exercise of the franchise. As a matter of fact, it is quite obvious to any one who reads the first clause that it embraces a far wider scope, and that it is a Franchise Bill, a Redistribution Bill, and a Registration Bill rolled into one. The practical effects of the Bill are three. In the first place, it is in a sense, at all events, a disfranchising measure. The hon. Member who last spoke objects to the use of that phrase, but I must point out that the Bill if passed would deprive a certain number of electors of the vote which Parliament gave them in 1885 as the result of a compact between the two great parties of the State. In the second place, the Bill will effect a very considerable alteration in the voting power of a number of constituencies situated on the border of the metropolitan area; and, in the third place, it will affect the system of registration by creating totally different registers for London and for the country, so that it will be possible for a Government which is not popular with the London electors to arrange the general election for a time when the country would be voting on the new register and London would be voting on the old. That is one of the changes the Bill introduces with regard to registration. There is another, perhaps less objectionable, but certainly open to criticism. The Bill throws on the county rate all charges connected with the expense of registration. There is a good deal to be said no doubt for relieving the candidate, but, in my opinion, if these expenses are to be defrayed out of public funds they should be charged not on the local rates but on the public exchequer. I am not aware of any precedent for a Bill dealing with such important changes in the franchise being submitted to the consideration of the House on the initiative of a private Member. Until the Plural Voting Bill was brought in two years ago, there was no precedent, I believe, for considering a Bill for the alteration of the franchise even when introduced by a responsible Government, except within a reasonable distance of a general election, and for a Bill of this kind to be introduced by a private Member at a time when presumably we are not within sight of a general election—so far as we know—and to be brought in in such a form as to make it absolutely impossible when the Bill goes into Committee for the House to consider the question of either franchise, registration, or redistribution as a whole, is so startling a proceeding that I can hardly imagine that the Government will lend their sanction to such a course. What is the justification for this Bill? Take it from the point of view of practical expediency. I think everybody will admit that an essential object of any statesmanlike effort to deal with the question of the franchise should be to settle it on a foundation which affords some prospect of permanency. Nothing could be worse than that the basis of our franchise should be perpetually altered from one general election to another. No one can believe that a Bill like this, which treats London as if it differed entirely from the rest of the country, and which does not even provide for the assimilation of the Parliamentary to the municipal boundaries inside the Metropolitan area, affords any prospects of permanence at all. Or again, consider it from the standpoint of political principle. The Government and their supporters strongly object no doubt to the principle of plural voting. But this Bill does not propose to abolish the plural voter on principle. That is merely one of the accidental results of the Bill, and it is to have only a limited operation. And how absurd would be such a method of dealing with the question. A man living in Guildford who has business premises in the City might still vote in both constituencies; but a man residing in South Kensington and having a business place in the City could vote only in one constituency. Therefore the only plural voter that will be disfranchised is the plural voter who has the greater interest in the area affected by the Bill. The same argument applies to the proposed rearrangement of constituencies. Anybody who contemplates a measure of redistribution should seek to bring about, so far as he can, equalisation of voting power between different constituencies, but there is no pretence that the redistribution provided for by this Bill will have that effect. On the contrary, it will increase the electorate of constituencies already too large and thereby make them even less fairly represented than they are now. Then look at the logic of this proposal. The hypothesis is that London is as an area so homogeneous in character that for political purposes it should practically be treated as one. If we are to accept that assumption we are running counter to the principle recognised by both the Franchise Bill of 1885 and the Local Government Act passed by the last

Government, which emphasised the divergence of interest of the different parts of London and made in the direction of further decentralisation. But granting the assumption for the sake of argument, what is the inference which the supporters of this Bill draw from it. That because the whole of London is subject for local purposes to one county council, therefore it should be treated for political purposes as if it were governed by one borough council, surely that is not a logical conclusion. I think there is a good deal to be said in favour of certain changes which this Bill proposes—for increasing the hours of voting, for assimilating the municipal with the Parliamentary boundaries within the metropolitan area, for placing the cost of registration on public funds, the Imperial Exchequer rather than the local rates, and for holding all the elections on one day. But all these reforms ought to be dealt with as parts of a general reform of the whole system of franchise and registration. Without wishing to make any partisan attack on the Government or the Liberal Party, I think they must see that if they insist on treating this question piecemeal, and refuse to deal with it as a whole, they are inevitably laying themselves open to the charge of attempting—at a time when both the municipal and the Parliamentary elections indicate that the feeling of the country is not enthusiastically in their favour—by a measure of disfranchisement and of gerrymandering to anticipate a verdict which they feel would not be in their favour.

*THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Dr. MACNAMARA, Camberwell, N.): As a London Member I wish to say a word or two on this Bill. I recognise that the Bill is designed to secure co-equal treatment for London to that enjoyed by provincial boroughs. That is the stated object of the promoters, and I must say that having read the Bill through, I fail entirely to recognise it in the horrible picture drawn in the speech of the hon. Member for the City of London. The Bill endeavours to secure the treatment of London as one Parliamentary borough, and by that means it secures through the medium of successive occupation the enfranchisement of 50,000 persons. It is, therefore, an enfranchising and not a disfranchising measure. In the second place, it deals very largely, and I am bound to say very drastically, with the method of making up the Parliamentary register. We had a moving picture presented to us of the difficulty which would be experienced in making up the register in the case of William Smith, Esq., late of Acacia Villas, Peckham, and now of the City of London. Well, I daresay that difficulty will be overcome. This Bill would slightly alter certain Parliamentary areas, but I think its operation in that direction has been overstated. It would alter the method of appointing the revising barristers in London south of the Thames. It would also alter the method of selecting the returning officers for Parliamentary London, and would extend the hours of polling. I am pleased to see that that reform is to be taken in hand. I should like to say a few words on the fundamental points of the Bill. First of all, with regard to making London one Parliamentary borough instead of as at present. I think that is a most excellent proposal. As a London Member, I know that it would enfranchise by successive occupation thousands of electors who are now disfranchised, and it would simply go the length, and no further, of applying to London the principle which is already the law and practice in provincial boroughs. On the other hand, it would undoubtedly abolish plural voting within the borough. I must say that this, too, is a most excellent proposition, and it is simply applying the law of the provinces in this case to London. I do not make any apology for supporting the abolition of the principle of plural voting. The principle in its universal application would go very much further than this proposal. The principle of the abolition of plural voting was endorsed by the House of Commons in 1906, and the Second Reading of the Plural Voting Bill was carried by 403 to ninety-five. There were many divisions in Committee, where the supporters of the proposal rarely scored less than 300 in its favour, and the opponents never more than 100. The Third Reading of the Bill was carried by 333 to 104. Therefore, there need be no apology for the abolition of plural voting under this Bill. But in this case, as I have said, the application of the principle is much more restricted, and simply applies to London what is the law in the provincial boroughs throughout the country. That is to say, a man may vote in Camberwell but he may not vote in Kennington as well, any more than a man may vote in North and South Bristol, and we propose to apply the law of North and South Bristol to London. With continuous occupation, thereby enfranchising thousands of people, and with the abolition of plural voting within the borough, I must say I should have thought the clause would have been agreed to by common consent. I shall be very much surprised if, when we get into Committee upstairs, the propositions contained in Subsection (1) Clause 1 encounter much resistance. Clause 1, Subsection 2 will slightly alter the Parliamentary constituency areas, and I think that hon. Gentlemen opposite will see that it is a very necessary piece of simplification. By the Local Government Act of 1899 South Hornsey was brought into the London area, and part of Penge was taken out of London and adjusted to the municipal area; and there are one or two more places which will have to be dealt with. It is not intended, however, to do anything in this direction on so large a scale as was proposed by the right hon. Gentleman for South Dublin in his Local Government Bill of 1902. This proposal, by the way, stood by itself, and was not a general scheme for the whole country. This Bill only proposes to deal with the variations in the outer boundary between the municipal borough and the Parliamentary borough, and to assimilate them. The proposal is merely to adjust the variations in the boundary lines.

EARL PERCY: My right hon. friend's scheme merely touched the question of boundaries.

*DR. MACNAMARA: I am only dealing with the question of boundaries. I say that the proposal now made deals merely with the variations of the boundaries as between the municipal and the Parliamentary boroughs on the outer boundary line. But I say that this is a very necessary and very urgent piece of simplification, which I, for one, should like to see taken in hand. Clauses 2 to 4 inclusive raise the whole question of registration, and they raise it very drastically. I agree with my hon. friend the proposer of the Bill that the state of registration in London is generally pretty bad. I do not think it could be worse in any part of the country; at the same time, I also agree with him that in some parts of London the work is well done. Now it is proposed by Clause 2 that the Secondary of the City of London and the town clerks of the metropolitan boroughs, being the persons whose duty it is to prepare the lists of voters, shall include in the lists the name of every person who is by law entitled to vote, and shall for this purpose make all necessary inquiries and provide and collect forms of claims, and so on. The main object of this proposal no doubt is that the town clerks shall inquire as to the lodgers and get them placed on the register if qualified. At present the town clerk must inquire as to occupiers, but the lodger is left to the political agencies, which I think, personally, is very undesirable, besides being a very pressing exaction upon the pocket of a poor man who wishes to to become a member of this House for a London constituency. I associate myself with the proposal that this duty should be imposed upon a public official, who should not only look after the occupier but also after the lodger, and see that the lodger as well as the occupier is put on the list at the hands of a public official as he is entitled to be, and not at the instance of a private political agent of either party. The Bill would require the town clerk to ascertain if the lodger is qualified, and if he be so, to give him a form of claim and collect it. I admit that when this Bill comes into Committe it will have to be closely looked at. I think that my hon. friend will be very well advised if he meet those who think they have a better, more economical, less involved, and more expeditious scheme. I was very glad to understand from him that he is prepared to meet those who think that they have a better scheme in regard to registration.

I observe that my hon. friend does not endeavour to deal with the curious position of the lodger as left by the decision in Kent *v* Fittal. I think I rather understand why he does not do so. He does not deal with this very urgent problem because the question raised in Kent *v.* Fittal applies to the whole country, whereas the Bill deals with the London problem alone. I associate myself entirely with his self-denying ordinance. Clause 4, Sub-section 1, does, no doubt, as has been stated by the hon. Baronet who has moved the rejection, slightly alter the qualification by substituting 25th June for 15th July, and Clause 4, Sub-section 3, would cause the register to come into operation on 1st November, thereby differentiating between London and the provinces. My hon. friend would no doubt deal with these matters fully in Committee, and I myself would like to be informed more fully as to why he desires to alter the date from 15th July to 25th June. All these matters, I am sure, he would be prepared to place fully before the Committee, and I think he ought to be prepared to secure a full examination as to practice and desirability of this Clause 4, and the bringing into operation the register on 1st November instead of 1st January. Clause 5, providing for the appointment of revising barristers by the Lord Chief Justice, Clause 6, for the appointment of the Clerk of the London County Council as the returning officer, and Clause 7 extending the basis of voting—with all these proposals in the Bill I entirely associate myself. As to the suggestion in Clause 6, my hon. friends well know that twenty-two borough councils in London have petitioned the Home Office in favour of the proposal in the Bill, and the other seven, I am glad to know, although they did not seal the petition, are not dissenting from the proposal, that the clerk of the London County Council shall be the relieving officer for the Parliamentary borough of London, and an election of a Member of Parliament within the Parliamentary borough shall be conducted in the same manner as in the case of an election of a county councillor.

MR. GUINNESS (Bury St. Edmunds): What date—before the last election?

*DR. MACNAMARA: I do not quite understand the reason for that question. I have nothing to do with the last election. I want to get the electoral machinery for London on the best and most democratic basis, and I resent most strongly the suggestion that I or any one associated with this Bill is inspired by motives of gerrymandering the constituencies of London. I think that is a thoroughly unworthy suggestion.

MR. GUINNESS: On a point of personal explanation, may I say as the hon. Member seems to take it that we have made a reflection on what he stated —that our point is whether the borough council s signed the petition before or after the elections last March.

*DR. MACNAMARA: I repeat that I do not know whether it was before or after, but it has nothing to do with the matter. I say twenty-two out of twenty-nine have petitioned in favour of the proposal of Clause 6 and the other seven have not dissented. Now I am asked what is the date. So far as I am concerned the date has nothing to do with it. This copy of the petition has no date upon it. I do not know whether hon. Members at all think that is intentional. I can assure them it is not. I do not think the question whether the present or the last borough council signed that petition at all affects the attitude of the borough councils generally towards Clause 6. Now may I make one or two comments upon the Amendment? The Member for the City of London says the Bill proposes to turn a county into a borough. It proposes to do nothing of the kind. London is not a Parliamentary county; therefore in this case you are not turning a county into a borough. London consists of a number of Parliamentary boroughs, respectively included in the counties of Kent, Surrey, and Middlesex. It consists of twenty-eight boroughs and fifty-eight constituencies. It is not a Parliamentary county, and therefore you are not turning a county into a borough. The Amendment says it will alter the franchise. It does nothing of the sort, except in so far as to assimilate the practice of provincial boroughs to London. The hon Baronet says it alters the electoral boundaries. As a result of the Act of 1899, part of Hornsey was taken into London and part of Penge taken out. It proposes to readjust the boundary. That is all the alteration in the area.

SIR F. BANBURY: As I understand it, it gives power to extend the Parliamentary area to the area of the administrative county of London. That being so, the area can be extended to a much greater degree than the hon. Gentleman thinks. I would also point out that, if the desire of certain people is carried out that the administrative county of London should be largely extended, Croydon and West Ham would be included.

*DR. MACNAMARA: No, you would then, I should think, require another statute altogether. If you are going to extend very largely the Metropolitan area you would require another statute I should say.

SIR F. BANBURY: You could do it by Order in Council.

*DR. MACNAMARA: You can do many things by an Order in Council, but I doubt whether you could do that. What is exactly proposed is that Hornsey and Penge should be re-adjusted on the outer boundary. This proposal is a very much narrower one than that which proceeded from the President of the Local Government Board in 1902. That Bill not only adjusted the outer boundary, but re-adjusted boundaries inside by assimilating Parliamentary and municipal areas. Therefore, I desire to point out that this alteration of electoral boundaries is obviously very much smaller than the Member for the City of London contemplated. With regard to the hours of voting, the proposition of the Amendment is that the extension should be dissented from because it alters the hours of polling in one part of the country without regard to the hours of polling in the United Kingdom. These are the terms of the Amendment. My hon. friend is evidently under the impression that there is uniformity of hours of polling throughout the country. Under the Hours of Polling Act, London borough council elections must take place between eight a.m. and eight p.m., and in London and the provinces the guardians elections are fixed by the County Council and in London the guardians elections are from eight a.m. to ten p.m. The point is made that there were very few people polling between 8 and 10. My reply is that very few people poll between any hours of the day in London, and it is one of the shortcomings, as far as I am concerned, in the administration of the guardians that so very few people take the interest they ought to take in the administration of such a great financial and humane concern. In the urban and rural districts my hon. friend is aware the county council by law is compelled to fix the hours, provided that they are at any rate from six in the morning till eight in the evening. Under the Hours of Polling Act all other elections are from eight till eight. There is, therefore, great variety in the hours of polling for all these various kinds of elections. To say you ought to do this because there is an apparent uniformity is, I think, to place your argument upon an entirely illusory foundation. I associate myself with the proposal to extend the hours as being a desirable proposition, and as far as I am concerned I hope it may come to pass. All I have to say with regard to the Bill generally is this, and I speak as a London Member:— I think there are points in the Bill that are urgently needed. I was very glad to hear the noble Lord's statement that he too thought as a London Member there were points in the Bill that were urgently needed.

EARL PERCY: I did not say there was any special urgency at all.

*DR. MACNAMARA: There are some points which are urgently needed. I have no doubt in my mind that the Bill ought to be read a second time, and I am very glad to find that the proposers hold themselves ready particularly in connection with highly technical and involved points to modify certain of its features. I most cordially hope that this little reform which does what ought to have been done long ago, and in the main merely assimilates the London and provincial law and practice, will have a Second Reading.

*SIR HENRY KIMBER (Wandsworth) said that this was a Bill to amend the Reform Act of 1885—nothing more and nothing less. It was all very well for the proposer and seconder and also for the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, to lay stress upon the minor advantages as he called them, proposed in the Bill, and to make little of the main object of the Bill which was plural voting abolition. Let them see for a moment what were the advantages which they said were so great. 50,000 voters were to be enfranchised who could not at present get a vote. It was pure nonsense. The hon. Gentleman said they were to be put on by giving them successive occupation—that was, facilities for transferring their votes when they went from one part of London to another. That was a matter that he supposed very few on that side would disagree about. He would not, at all events. But to call that the main object of the Bill was absurd. The cancellation of more than a million votes of the citizens of London by the abolition of the plural vote, the real object, was out of all proportion to that which was pretended to be the real object of the Bill. In 1906 they had the plural voting abolition brought in by the Government, and that proposed to do for the whole Kingdom what this Bill proposed to do for the Metropolis. He did not like to impute bad motives to anybody if he could find a good one, and he asked himself, whenever he saw a Bill which hurt anyone, what was its object. Was it a good one or a bad one? He knew that the Gentlemen who moved and supported this Bill were honourable men, as honourable as Brutus, but to ascertain what were the real motive and object of the Bill he looked to its paternity. Let him recall two dates in history. In 1906, they had a great Parliamentary election which reversed the position of parties and gave the present Government their enormous nominal majority of 350. But within twelve months of that the London County Council elections came on. Previously the majority in the London County Council were of the same complexion politically as the present majority in that House, but the electors reversed the position. The ratepayers of London took anothe view of the position of things. They could not deal with the House so soon after the general election, but they could deal with the county council, and they did deal with it, and they reversed the position there. He looked at names on the back of the Bill and he found that of the late Chairman of the County Council, a gentleman of high and good repute. He did not wish it to be supposed that he made any slur on any of these names, because he knew they were good and true men from their point of view, and he was sure they would only do what they thought right. They also had the late Vice-chairman who had moved the Bill and several other Members sitting opposite, whose party were defeated at the London County Council election. In the absence of any other motive he asked himself whether this might be one. It must be admitted that it might be one, and in the various motives that moved human nature in this world a feeling no doubt of disappointment, and perhaps, in the mind of some, of vindictiveness and desire for revenge, existed. He asked the mover and seconder whether they had not present in their hearts some feeling of resentment at that reverse. The Bill was calculated to have an effect upon future elections that would again reverse, if they could, the policy which was decided by the people of London at the last election. In fact, this was intended to be a retribution upon the ratepayers who were also the electoral voters in the metropolis for their temerity in having turned out the promoters of this Bill from their position on the County Council. He believed Mr. Gladstone said over and over again that no Reform Bill should disfranchise anybody, that any Bill for the reform of the suffrage should be an Enfranchisement Bill. More than that, any Bill for the reform of the representation of the people in that House ought not to be actuated by any partisan principle or feeling. In all that he had said or written in the last twenty years on this subject, and he had paid a good deal of attention to it, he had studiously avoided bringing into it any Party reasons of any kind. He had not considered whether it would make for the Party to which he belonged or against it. He had only considered what was right and tried to do it because it was right. What was the effect of this Bill? It was admitted by the mover, and it was rather amusing to find that he left this question of plural voting until the very last of all his reasons for the Bill, and he treated it with a sort of nonchalant manner as if it were only incidental. The Secretary to the Local Government Board had also taken that line. It was a very improper thing from their point of view and would not meet with the approval of the people of this country when they knew the whole subject. There was another quality that ought to be an ingredient in any Bill that dealt with the suffrage. It ought not to be directed against any particular class of the community, because that which benefited one class was relatively putting the rest of the community under a disadvantage. A Bill which altered the voting power of one constituency ought to be applied to all similar constituencies in the rest of the country. To give one little illustration. It was known that he represented a quarter of a million of people—the largest metropolitan constituency and the largest in the whole United Kingdom except two. The average population represented by any Member was about 65,000. The average of electors was about 11,000. It would give his constituency four Members. Some Members represented so small a number that the proportion was one to ten of his. The Reform Bill of 1884 ought not to be altered without the whole subject being examined and treated. It happened that under the existing law he had three votes in London. He voted for the City and he hoped nobody would grudge him his vote there. He had a vote for the City of Westminster because he happened to be a very large ratepayer there—he paid over £1,000 a year in rates and he got no municipal vote in respect of that at all, but he got a Parliamentary vote; and he had a vote for his own constituency. That might be wrong, but in the present state of the law it was a certain amount of compensation to a man living in Wandsworth that that was so, and it would be grossly unfair to deprive him of two out of the three, as the Bill did, unless the question of the redistribution of seats was taken into consideration at the same time. He did not dispute altogether the principle of one man one vote. They had in fact come to that. There was no living grown respectable man in the country who could not easily get on to the register. The total electorate was about seven and a half millions, and he believed it would be found that that was not far short of the whole manhood of the country. They had therefore practically manhood suffrage, and he thought it was right that every intelligent grown man should have a vote. But why should not a vote be valued? Let them enunciate and define what they meant by "one vote, one value." It was the fault of their side that they had been too long about it. He was not afraid of grappling with the question of one man, one vote, and it was germane to this question that they should discuss it now. They could never get the advantage of the wisdom of the minority unless they were given a superior vote. At present they had that variety given in a variety of ways. They had it in the freehold vote, in University representation, and so on. He did not think they ought, whilst extending the franchise, to destroy any of those species of plural votes until they took into consideration the whole question of one vote one value. There was another thing to be considered, and it was that in all their rating reforms the owner had not been given a vote in the municipal councils in respect to the expenditure of his money. It had always been admitted that was a wrong in our representative system. Changes were taking place in the condition of property upon which the owner now paid the rates. In many cases the landlords paid all the rates and although the occupiers contributed at first by inclusion in their rents, they were not affected by subsequent rises in the rates. He considered that this Bill was an attempt to municipalise Parliament. The constituency he represented consisted of four towns which never had a separate representative until 1885. The residents in Streatham, Balham, Tooting, Wandsworth, Putney, Roehampton, and Richmond Park could not be said to have the same sort of interests as those which existed in the centre of the City of London from which all the arteries of financial life spread over the globe. It was absurd to say that London under those circumstances should be created one Parliamentary borough. The object of this measure had been described as one to assimilate representation and provide that that should take place in London which took place in the provinces. This Bill would not accomplish that, for in such places as Liverpool and Birkenhead a man could now have a vote for both places. The same applied to Birmingham and Aston Manor, Manchester and Salford, and other places. Under those circumstances how could it be said that they were assimilating London to the provinces? Of London there were fifty-eight representatives in this House excluding the City. They were created by the Act of 1884, and some of them were made single member constituencies, and his constituency was one of them. At that time he represented 65,000 people, now 257,000; but Islington, which was one parish, was divided into four Parliamentary boroughs. The system which obtained in the country, of not allowing any citizen in one Parliamentary division of a municipal borough to vote in another division of the same borough, obtained at the present time in composite boroughs such as Islington. Parliament distinguished and particularised those boroughs which were divided from those like Wandsworth which were not. Therefore, there was existing at the present time the same time in regard to divided boroughs in London as there was in the country. The promoters claimed that this Bill would only make London like the provincial boroughs, and to make that claim good they were proposing to make London into one borough first, and then say London is only like a provincial borough, instead of being as it is twenty-nine cities and towns. The hon. Member for the City of London in the last part of his Amendment stated as one reason for opposing this measure that no Bill which altered the exercise of the franchise, which was a constitutional question, and in the present Bill affected the balance of the electoral power between the 5,000,000 people of London and the 35,000,000 people outside London, ought to be passed unless accompanied by a Redistribution Bill. He would like to show the defects in the present system of distribution, and he would show how much larger they were than those which were mentioned in this Bill. He would also try to show how important it was that those defects should be rectified, because they were real evils, whilst the evils mentioned in the Bill were very small indeed compared with them. In 1885, when he entered Parliament, the proportion of the lowest to the highest constituency in the country was one to eight, and that disparity had since increased by two or three every year. When he raised this question in 1893, the late Sir William Harcourt admitted that these disparities and anomalies were things that ought to be attended to by any Government sooner or later, and, he added, sooner rather than later. Sir William Harcourt requested him to withdraw his Resolution on a promise that the question might be taken into consideration. It had twice been promised in the King's Speech. What was the state of the case now? When he spoke in 1893 the disparity was thirteen to one; next year it was fifteen to one, and now it was thirty to one. The largest constituency in the Kingdom was thirty times as large as the smallest. This was not the case of one constituency alone, because the disparity ran into a large number of constituencies. He would take for example the General Election of 1906, bearing in mind that the total number of electors was 7,500,000. The total of 3,400,000 of Liberal, Labour, and Nationalist votes secured 512 representatives, whilst 2,500,000 Unionist votes secured 150 representatives. Dividing the votes over the number of seats the 512 representatives obtained an average of 6,629 votes whereas the 150 Unionist representatives obtained an average of 16,189 votes. Several times the Prime Minister had used the phrase "The will of the people," and he quite agreed that that should be the basis of representation. The figures he had given were taken from the House of Commons

Poll Book, issued by the Liberal Publication Department. The figures he would presently give were taken from the Parliamentary Return published in 1907, and since then the disparity he had drawn attention to had vastly increased. The present Government by the chapter of accidents had obtained a majority of 354; but supposing every man's vote in the House of Commons were valued by the number of voters in his constituency, the effect would be that the present Government majority would be reduced by 260, which would leave them with a majority of only 94. Therefore he had a right to infer that whenever the Government majority was less than 260 it was really as regarded the will of the people no majority at all. [Cries of "Question."] He had analysed 143 of those majorities, and he found that only in two of them the majority was as high as 260, and in all but forty-nine it was less than 200. If the will of the people was to be expressed equitably and fairly where might the Opposition have been, and where would the supporters of the Government have been? London had a population of 4,500,000; Ireland had a little less, and Scotland rather more. Yet London had fifty-nine representatives for that population, Scotland had seventy-two, while Ireland had 103. Was not that a disparity which ought to be removed? Three hon. Members in this House—two of them sitting opposite and himself—represented 120,000 electors, or an average of 40,000 each. If they took this year's register it would be a great deal more. There were thirty-five other hon. Members of the House who altogether represented less than 120,000 electors. How could it be said that the will of the people was properly represented by such a system? By way of illustration he would divide the House of 670 Members into half. One-half of them represented 5,137,117 or an average of 15,334, whereas the other half represented 2,309,519 or an average of 6,894. Taking it another way, one-half of the total electorate, that is 3,723,318, got 445 representatives and the other half only 225. He could, if he desired, multiply those examples by the dozen. At the last election Wales recorded 56,000 Unionist votes, which obtained no representation at all. He could show, if necessary, that every Government since he had been in this House had admitted to him that redistribution was a thing which ought to be taken in hand. That was admitted by the last Government, and he thought there were many supporters of the present Government who were in favour of his proposal. There were, he believed, supporters of his proposal on both sides in sufficient number to make up more than half of the House. He wished to impress on the Government and all who were taking an interest in our system of representation that, as a matter of justice, and not as a matter of Party at all, the question of redistribution should be taken in hand. He hoped in a few days to submit his own proposal to the House in the form of a Bill, and urged that the present Bill dealing with the subject in a piecemeal, unjust, disfranchising manner should not be proceeded with. He could see no reason for its introduction but a Party one and an intention to perpetuate by an alteration in the law the majority on the other side of the House.

*MR. BOWERMAN (Deptford) said he wished to express from the workman's point of view his impression of the Bill now before the House. He complimented the mover on the lucid manner in which he had expounded its provisions. The last speaker had charged the promoters of the measure with unworthy motives, and with vindictiveness. He could assure the hon. Baronet that so far as he was personally concerned, nothing of the kind had entered into his mind, and he was satisfied also that vindictiveness was the last thing which would enter into the thoughts of the other Members who had placed their names on the back of the Bill. The hon. Baronet had stated as one of his reasons for opposing the Bill that workmen lived in every instance within a mile of a polling booth. Assuming that to be the case—and he was not going to contradict it—he would point out that the hon. Baronet had lost sight of the fact that a London workman had to travel from his home to his work, and that he had to be at his work in ninety-nine cases out of 100 before eight o'clock in the morning. He had probably to travel from seven to ten miles to get to business, and in returning to his home he had to perform the same journey at night. The result in thousands of cases had been that workmen rushed from their work to the polling booth on election days, and, though reaching the place in time to record their votes, they were not able to vote because of the large crowd assembled there. The hon. Baronet should have considered the distance between, not the home and the polling booth, but between the place of business and the polling booth.

SIR F. BANBURY said he did not bring that forward as a reason for opposing the Bill, but as a reason to show that, if the hours of polling were altered in London, there was greater reason why they should be altered in the country. The means of communication were not so good in the country as in London, and it was as important that electors in the country should be able to vote easily as in London.

*MR. BOWERMAN said the House was at present dealing with the interests of London, and he was one of those who thought that those interests had been too long neglected. So far from the Bill now before the House being a measure of disfranchisement, it was in quite the other direction. It would, to a large extent, enfranchise workmen by enabling them to record their votes. He thought there was not a Member of the House who did not feel that the system of registration should be amended in some way. Reference had been made to the case in which the decision of the revising barrister depended upon the answer to the question, "Whether the wife of the claimant shook the front door mat." That was the position placed before many of his supporters in Deptford, and if this Bill did no more than correct such an anomaly, he felt that the House would be engaged in good work that afternoon. The law as it stood was extremely deficient. Replying to a deputation on this subject a few days ago, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said that the law had a tendency to keep men off the register instead of assisting to put them on. He cordially approved of the provision that town clerks should be held responsible for the compilation of the voting list. Two years ago in the constituency which he had the honour to represent, the town clerk and his assistants were made responsible by the borough council for compiling the voting list, and the work was done in an exceedingly satisfactory manner. Last year, owing to a change which had taken place in the *personnel* of the borough council, the same system was not carried out, and the result was that a large expenditure of money was imposed on the Party agents and those in whose interest they were acting. Workmen were being disfranchised year after year by the absurd and unnecessary difficulties which were being placed in their way. He appealed to hon. Members on both sides of the House to give this Bill their support. Members of the Opposition had suggested that the Government should appeal to the country. He supposed that if there was such an appeal, the first thing they would say to the workmen was that the Unionist Party were prepared to find them more work. But when it came to a question of finding workmen more votes, it seemed that they were not so ready with their support as they should be. This measure would enfranchise thousands of workmen, and he hoped that Unionist Members would vote for it as a measure of justice to London.

*MR. GUINNESS (Bury St. Edmunds) said that on the only previous occasion on which he had addressed the House he was told he had no right to speak on the question of Ireland, because he was not an Irishman. That statement was rather wide of the mark. He might this afternoon anticipate a similar criticism by mentioning that although he did not sit for a London Parliamentary constituency, he represented a London electoral division on a body which reflected the present political opinions of the London electorate more truly than hon. Members who sat for London constituencies on the opposite side of the House. An hon. Member who preceded him had stated that the London County Council had not yet had an opportunity of considering this Bill. The Council had, however, considered one or two points. On 17th December last a motion was submitted to the London County Council that steps should be taken to introduce in the session of 1908 the London Municipal Elections (Hours of Polling) Bill, which proposed to apply to municipal elections the same provisions as were embodied in this Bill to extend the hours of polling. That motion, proposed by a Progressive member, was rejected by a large majority, there being, in the opinion of the Council, no case whatever made out for the change. The poll for the election of boards of guardians was now kept open till 10 o'clock, but it was curious to find that a far smaller proportion of the electorate took the trouble to vote at those elections than at any other elections. In London the percentage voting at the Parliamentary elections in 1906 was 78·3, at the County Council election in March last 55·5, and at the borough councils elections 48·2. At the elections for guardians in spite of the extra two hours only 28·1 voted. That showed conclusively that if people wanted to vote they would do so during the twelve hours allowed at present. Why should they extend the hours of polling to fourteen? What particular virtue was there in that number? Why not a week or a fortnight? In 1902 a Bill was introduced to allow sailors to give their votes at any time after notice had been given of the nomination. That Bill did not pass, but there was a great deal more to be said for it than for this measure. He thought hon. Members looked at the matter from a very selfish point of view. No doubt elections were very important to them, but they were an abominable nuisance to everybody else. If the hours of polling were extended to 10 o'clock, it would be impossible to do the counting the same evening. That would practically mean the loss of two working days. On the day of the election people were kept on tenter hooks, and if the counting were postponed, the following day as a working day would be destroyed. Then the extension of the hours of polling would greatly encourage facilities for bribery. [Cries of "Oh!"] Undoubtedly it would. It was in the evening that there was the greatest danger of treating. [AN HON. MEMBER: They will get cheap stout.] They did not want to sell cheap stout for treating. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board made a point about rectifying the boundaries of the London constituencies. The hon. Member who introduced this Bill had also made a great point of the alteration of the county boundaries. He thought that that was a matter which would not benefit London in the least; certainly it was not a matter of any importance. A great deal was to be said for altering the boundaries within the administrative county, and the London County Council had expressed itself in favour of that being done. On 30th March last a resolution was passed that the attention of the Local Government Board should be drawn to the matter, and that the Parliamentary and Local Government areas should be made coterminous and non-conflicting. If the hon. Member who introduced the Bill had incorporated a clause of that kind a great deal could have been said in its favour. In his own case electors in Kensal Rise voted with those in Chelsea for Parliamentary and county council purposes, although the two districts were separated by four miles; but they voted with Paddington for borough council elections. This was a crying evil at the present time, and if a new delimitation had been suggested there would have been considerable argument to back it up. Dealing with the Bill from the London County Council point of view, he contended that it would impose a large additional expense on the county rates. Under Section 2, the new duty was imposed on the London County Council of looking after and being entirely responsible financially not only for the registration of voters who were automatically on the list, but also of lodgers who, under the existing system, had to apply annually for their votes. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board had stated that this section would give equal treatment to London and provincial towns.

DR. MACNAMARA: I did not say that.

*MR. GUINNESS said that what he wished to point out was that it did not put London on an equality with a provincial borough, because the latter was undivided, and there was no difficulty in preventing people from getting two qualifications. The registration books and the rate books were in the hands of the registration officers in the provincial towns; but at present the rate books and the data of the registration were in the hands of the borough councils which ought to be responsible for the whole of the work. At present, the London County Council had to pay half the cost of registration and half the cost of printing the register, and it was undesirable that a large additional burden should be thrown on the general county rate in connection with the duty of registering lodgers who applied for votes. The cost of canvassing would be enormous, and it would be impossible to foretell what that cost would be, for the officials would have to call on every house over and over again. [AN HON. MEMBER: That is done now.] He did not think so. He was told that in the provincial towns it was done by consulting the rate books, and circularising the ratepayers, and also largely by political organisations. If political organisations were now willing to spend money in order to get people on the register, why, then, should the ratepayers' money be squandered in paying for what was being done already at the cost of rival political parties? Then, it was proposed to put everybody on the register who was entitled to a vote, whether they wanted it or not. Many people did not want to have the Parliamentary vote. [Cries of "Name."] He had had experience of that himself. He called on an elector last March and when he opened the door—[Cries of "Oh, oh."]—the gentleman said—

> "Ah! You have come to bother me about this election. I notice that you are a Municipal Reformer. If you were a Progressive I would kick you downstairs in the hope of doing you grievous bodily injury; but as you are a Municipal Reformer I will content myself with banging the door in your face."

They knew that there were people who did not at all appreciate being canvassed for their votes. They were sick to death of being asked for political votes and being subjected to that sort of pressure. Clause 4 was very objectionable. The hon. Gentleman who moved the Second Reading of the Bill very wisely made light of this clause, and said that it would be dealt with in Committee. The clause proposed to alter the date for computing the list of those qualified to vote in Parliamentary and county and parochial elections from July 15th to June 25th. That was a very extraordinary proposal. At the present moment sufficient time was allowed after the beginning of the Michaelmas quarter to enable those who had moved to be clear of the house, and for the incoming tenant to settle down. If the date were to be altered until the day after the end of the midsummer quarter people would only be found turning out of their houses, and the incoming tenant would consequently be likely to be disfranchised for a period of two years and four months. He thought that the hon. Member who introduced the Bill should have given some information as to what grounds he had for this extraordinary proposal. If the change was advisable, it should be made applicable to the whole country. He came now to the question of the returning officer. Under Section 11 of the Reform Act of 1832, the returning officer was appointed by the High Sheriff of the County of London, with the exception of the returning officer of the City and the borough of Southwark, where the high bailiff was the returning officer. In the divisions of St. George's, Hanover Square, the Strand, and the City of Westminster, the high bailiff of Westminster was also the returning officer. The London County Council had considered this matter, but had not reached the same conclusion as the hon. Gentleman who introduced this Bill. On 31st July last the London County Council passed a resolution setting forth that they were not prepared to advocate legislation on the point apart from the general question of the reform of the law relating to Parliamentary representation, but that they believed the town clerks of the metropolitan boroughs should be the returning officers, and that the Home Office should be informed of this opinion. They also suggested that there should be a central control. They had been told that the object of the Bill was to prevent voters losing their qualifications by removing from one district to another. But why apply this system to London alone? At any rate he thought it was impracticable; and that it was not possible to set up any clearing-house system by which removals could be traced from one constituency to another. It could not be carried out for the whole of the country; then why should London be selected for differential treatment. They ought to avoid making a difference which would prevent some people from having equal rights and equal treatment with others. Moreover, he would point out that it was common knowledge that London was on the eve of very great changes affecting its system of government. It was commonly believed that a right hon. Gentleman on the Treasury Bench was turning over in his mind a system which would re-organise the whole principles on which the Poor Law was administered. It was obvious that the right hon. Gentleman was not yet in a position to lay his decision before Parliament, seeing he was waiting the Report of the Poor Law Commission. Surely it would be a great mistake to prejudice this important question by hasty legislation. One point which would arise would be, who was to be the authority to administer the old-age pensions, or the duties of the boards of guardians which were to be swept away? Was the Metropolitan Asylums Board also to disappear? If so, were they going to have a new central authority elected *ad hoc*, were they going to have a nominative authority, or would they throw this new responsibility on the London County Council? If the latter alternative were to be adopted, the London County would probably have to be increased, and the question would arise whether the additional number of members was to be obtained by enlarging the county or by allowing existing constituencies to return more representatives. All these questions were bound up with the system of election in London, and he thought it would be a great pity to "queer the pitch" by dealing with this question before they were ready for it and rushing into hasty legislation.

MR. J. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): Are you in favour of redistribution?

*MR. GUINNESS said he was in favour of redistribution, although he did not see what that had to do with the point he was dealing with. There was a contrast between giving a Member to St. George's-in-the-East, with an electorate of 3,800, and only one Member to Clapham with an electorate of 22,000 or Wandsworth with an electorate of 38,000. If the question of London government was to be thrown into the melting-pot, it ought not to be done until a Redistribution Bill was brought in. If the franchise was to be altered at all that would necessarily bring up the whole question of the representation of minorities, which was a question of not only who was going to vote, but how they were going to vote. He thought it was a great pity to interfere with the question at all, until they were ready to deal with it on broad and comprehensive lines. They had heard about Reform Bills which had been brought in by tottering Governments—[Sir F. BANBURY: Hear, hear.] He thought his hon. friend misjudged what he was saying. He did not accuse the present Government of being a tottering Government, or of bringing in a Reform Bill at the present moment, and they all knew that these Reform Bills had not in the past fulfilled the rosy expectations entertained by those who brought them in. What he was going to say was that we had never in the whole history of the country had a hole and corner Bill of this kind, which was simply brought in to secure the vested interests of certain Liberal Members who for the time being represented London constituencies. He would again ask the House to look at the names of the hon. Members who backed the Bill. It had been pointed out to him by his hon. friend that among the names on the Bill were those of three late chairmen of the London County Council, who at least attached due weight to the danger signal, that the London County Council had changed its political allegiance. Then again, no less than half of the Members who fathered this Bill were sitting for what used to be considered safe Radical seats, but which seats had in the course of the Municipal elections turned away from their allegiance of eighteen years in many cases and returned municipal reformers. The hon. Members who sat for West St. Pancras, Haggerston, Woolwich, North Islington, and for the Mile End and Limehouse divisions of Tower Hamlets, sat for boroughs which had discarded Radicalism for municipal reform. They all quite appreciated the great temptation which it must be to hon. Members opposite to try and make use of their exceptional Parliamentary majority to try and disfranchise those who were suspected of being likely to vote against them. He thought, however, in the case of London, they were rather wasting their time, because in the London County Council elections there was no plural voting, and, notwithstanding that, hon. Gentlemen opposite fared very badly at the municipal polls last March. He thought it was a great mistake, from their own point of view, to disfranchise a large number of the small shopkeepers of London; and that was what this Bill would do, because many a man did not live over his shop but lived just over the Metropolitan Borough boundary, and, in future under this Bill he would have only one vote instead of two as he had had in the past. He hoped the House would not consent to increase the anomalies of our electoral system by singling out London for special treatment, but would refuse to grant a Second Reading to this Bill, because it was perfectly obvious that it would prejudice the prospects of bringing about in the near future a broad and uniform settlement of a question which they all admitted offered great anomalies, namely, that of the administration of the County of London and of the division of the electoral areas.

*MR. JOHN BURNS: The hon. Member who has just sat down is to be heartily congratulated on the admirable speech which he has delivered from his point of view. He has made one mistake, how ever, in that excellent presentation, and that is one upon which I will now correct him. This is not a Reform Bill, and we are not a tottering Government.

MR. GUINNESS: I did not say so.

*MR. JOHN BURNS: This is not a Reform Bill and the Government is not a tottering Administration.

MR. GUINNESS: May I say, I never said that the Government was a tottering one. I said that Reform Bills had been introduced by tottering Governments, and my hon. friend who sits for the City of London imagined that I was speaking of this Government.

*MR. JOHN BURNS: I think it would have been better if the hon. Member had left it as I left it, because his interruption has marred an otherwise excellent speech. As I said, this Bill is not a Reform Bill and it is not the Bill of a tottering Government. This is not a premonitory symptom of electoral despair, but it is rather a symptom of electoral justice for London, which we think has been too long delayed, and we venture to support this Bill for a few reasons, which I will proceed to give. This measure embodies only a few elementary matters dealing with the purely domestic electoral arrangements of London. The Government had intended to introduce a Bill dealing with the five or six essential features of the measure now before the House, but the fortunes of the ballot gave a London Member an opportunity of dealing with pressing London questions, and this Bill, which has been alternately represented as being a Redistribution Bill in disguise, or a gerrymandering measure of great and far-reaching proportions, only gives to London in regard to electoral affairs what provincial cities now enjoy; and it is because it is a simple Bill and deals with elementary points, which have been too long denied to London, that the Government are disposed to support it with certain modifications. What is the nature of the changes? The Bill introduces five or six points. It makes London one Parliamentary borough instead of twenty-eight; it gives successive occupation within the county the same right that successive occupation would secure if London were Manchester or Birmingham. Successive occupation would not be broken by moving from one Parliamentary division of a borough to another elsewhere. Why should it be broken by moving from street to street in this vast city? Beyond that the Bill extends the hours of polling from eight to ten o'clock, which is a very sensible thing in my judgment to do. It places the appointment of revising barristers, apart from their payment, which is not materially touched by this Bill, on the south side of the River Thames in the same position as it is on the north side of the river, namely, in the hands of the Lord Chief Justice, and in my view we ought to have the same judicial authority dealing with the north as well as with the south. It makes the register three weeks earlier than now, which is a point for Committee, and it makes the Parliamentary area coextensive and co-terminous with the administrative county. I would like to say, also, that the Bill, apart from these specific proposals, unifies the London electorate, and that in my judgment is a useful thing. The hon. Member for Bury St. Edmunds spoke with regret of the fact that so small a proportion of London electors voted at the guardians election. I am sorry to think that as social conditions change, and as movements of population go on, there is a strong suspicion of the apathy with regard to the guardians elections being extended to borough council, perhaps to county council, and ultimately perhaps to Parliamentary elections, and anything which would arrest that is a thing to be accepted and adopted, because it will be a bad day for Parliament when citizens, both rich and poor, do not take that interest in all aspects of their political and municipal life which they have always done and which there is a tendency for them not to do. The Government think that a Bill like this, which unifies the London electorate, simplifies access to the roll of citizenship, secures in some directions economy in the preparation of the lists and registration expenses, and gives to the Central Authority some power of organising for political purposes the Metropolitan registers, not on a purely local basis, as too often they are now, but with a central co-ordinating power, is a measure which is desirable, simple, and effective. We also think that it gives, and I am glad of it, and I am obliged to the noble Lord the Member for Kensington for blessing it—it also gives to London the benefit of having all its elections on one day. I was glad to notice that the noble Lord was in favour of that change. I venture to support this Bill, apart from the reasons I have given, because the tendency in London is to unify more and more. Practically London is already one area for municipal purposes, for education, water, police, poor law, and metropolitan asylum purposes, and should be—[An HON. MEMBER: Not for police.] I beg pardon, but the fact that the police are not under the London County Council is a matter we need not go into at this moment, as the police of the Metropolis where they are not Imperial are extra Metropolitan and therefore so far as London is concerned centralised. I believe that a similar movement should be applied to our electoral arrangements for Parliamentary representation. It has been said that there is no need to extend the hours of polling, and may I deal with this for a moment. The hon. Baronet alluded to this, and curiously enough pointed to the guardians election;

as a reason for not extending the hours of polling. If he will look at page 11 of that book of London statistics, of which I am pleased to see he is a student—and if he continues to study it, I have no doubt he will probably become a Progressive or a Radical—he will find this fact, that in the first ten hours from eight in the morning at a guardians election in a district which is typical of the whole, some 1,500 voters polled, but in the last four hours the number was roughly 2,470; and, if that be true of an election of guardians it must be doubly true of elections for borough and county councils and for Parliamentary elections, where the proportion voting is not twenty-eight per cent. but seventy-eight per cent. of the electors. Now I come to the reason why London should in this matter, instead of being treated in a piecemeal way, be dealt with in such a manner as would bring it into line with what the provinces have enjoyed for the last forty or fifty years. London's exceptional size, its character, the conditions of a Metropolis, differentiate it from nearly every town and from nearly every other city. The enormous distances that men have to work away from the place in which they live differentiate it from even the big cities of Glasgow, Manchester, or Birmingham; then we know the extraordinary movement of its population and that in some districts the movement of population per annum ranges from 28 to 40 or in some areas 50 per cent.of the voters who are compelled to move from year to year. We ought not to do anything to prevent that mobility of population. It is a good sign that people do move about in London. It indicates that rapid and cheap traction has enlarged their choice in regard to housing and has given them an opportunity of following work, and getting work, and more continuous work, where they can. We have no right to injure this character of mobility, which makes for better housing, better work, and better conditions of life. We have no right to penalise a man who moves from one part of London to another, after his work or in search of better housing or of health by preventing him from getting his vote as easily as he would get it if he were a citizen of Manchester, Liverpool, or Birmingham. The Government were prepared to introduce a similar Bill to this and we are prepared to support the Second Reading, but, in saying that, we reserve to ourselves the right of improving one or two points referred to by hon. Gentlemen opposite, and of modifying one or two of the proposals of the Bill that the mover of it wisely suggested that he is open to be advised upon. Subject to that, I hope the House will give this Bill a Second Reading, and will place the London electorate in regard to successive occupation, revising barristers, hours of polling and central control of elections, in the position which provincial towns and cities now occupy. It is not a Bill which deals exceptionally with London, but it is is a Bill brought in to remove a longstanding grievance, and to give Londoners the privileges which provincial electors have long enjoyed, and it is on these grounds that the Government supports the Bill.

*MR. CHAPLIN (Surrey, Wimbledon): The right hon. Gentleman told my hon. friend behind me that this was not a Reform Bill, but he will not, I am sure, deny that it is a Bill dealing with a very important question of electoral reform, and if that is not a Reform Bill, I really do not know what in the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman a Reform Bill can be. It is idle to tell the House of Commons that in dealing with this question we are not to consider the question of Parliamentary reform, and that this is entirely distinct from a general Reform Bill, as it is limited to one particular part of the country. The right hon. Gentleman said that the fortunes of the ballot gave the hon. Gentleman who moved the Bill, this day, and therefore His Majesty's Government did not themselves introduce a Bill, which they at one time contemplated doing, but supported this one. But, Sir, it was not only the fortunes of the ballot. It was the favour of the Government who closured the debate upon the Address at an unusual early period of the session, which enabled this Bill to come on. We should be glad to hear from the right hon. Gentleman whether this was mearly a coincidence. We have no means of knowing, but I am bound to say the peculiarity of the circumstances and some things that have fallen from the right hon. Gentleman and others lead to the idea that when the Government closured the Address at the time they did, it was no objection to their action in that direction that it would enable this Bill to come on, which it certainly would not have done but for that action. My right hon friend the Member for the City of London made a suggestion in the course of his speech that a question should be put to the right hon. Gentleman as to whether the Government contemplated giving special facilities for the progress of this measure, and an interruption on the part of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board also gave colour to that suggestion when he said that it was only what has been done before, and when he named one or two Bills in regard to which it had been done in the past. I think under all the circumstances I am entitled to put the question to the right hon. Gentlemen, because if it be the case that the Government have in their mind the intention to make this a Government measure, then I say in a question of Parliamentary reform, one of the most important of all questions that Parliament can deal with, we have a right to ask that there shall be a further opportunity of debating the Bill on its Second Reading. If there is any colour for the suggestion that the Government contemplate giving further facilities in the future, then a Bill of this character ought not to be disposed of at a morning sitting on a Friday. I propose in the few words that I intend to trouble the House with upon this matter to draw attention to the objects and effects of this Bill and the methods by which it is proposed to accomplish those objects. Then I will give one or two reasons which occur to me why the sanction of the House should be withheld from this proposal. As to the first two points, I think the objects are admirably described in the Amendment placed upon the Paper by the hon. Bart. the Member for the City of London, and they were more tersely described by the hon. Member for Wandsworth when he said, "this is a Bill for the abolition of plural voting in London, and nothing else." That is what the Bill is for and it is no use concealing the fact that the main object of this Bill is the abolition of plural voting in London. The abolition of plural voting may or may not be a good thing, and personally I hold the opinion, if I may be allowed to say so, that the total abolition of plural voting in the Metropolis would not be in the interests of popular representation. If that principle is to be accepted, however, there is no question, no doubt whatever, that it ought to be of universal application. I am surprised that hon. Members should have any doubt or difference of opinion upon that point. This Bill is limited to fifty-eight constituencies of this country, and the remaining 500 or 600 are to remain on a totally different footing. Here I must note what appeared to me to be some inconsistencies in the speech of the hon. Member for North St. Pancras. The hon. Member said that London is placed in a very peculiar position, that the proportion of voters to adults in London is much less than it ought to be, is much less than it is in the country. The number of voters in London who are not but who ought to be on the register in London are many thousands. But what is his remedy? According to the hon. Member the number of persons with votes in London is much less than it ought to be. But under this Bill he is going still further to diminish them. Now may I turn just for a moment to the methods by which the desired objects of this Bill are to be secured? The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Local Government Board expressed his great surprise that Section 1 of Clause 1 of this Bill should be subjected to hostile criticism, as he thought it ought to be universally accepted. I am bound to say I differ entirely from the hon. Gentleman. I differ because if the question of electoral reform is to be dealt with at all, it should be dealt with by a Bill applying to the whole of the country; so I have always understood during my political career. The views put forward at the present time are in entire and complete contradiction to all those traditions which were accepted by Radical Ministers and Governments quite as much as by Tory and Unionist Ministers and Governments. This matter ought to be dealt with by a Bill applying to the whole of the country and dealing with all branches of this question. Instead of this we have an Electoral Reform Bill dealing only with one small point in the innumerable anomalies of our electoral law, because it may be to the advantage of the Party now in power. Some of these anomalies were in the mind of the hon. Member himself when he criticised Clauses 3 and 4. With regard to Clause 4 it is the fact that by altering the date from the 1st January to the 1st November when the new list and register of electors comes into operation, you will have this extraordinary state of things, and will introduce this absolutely new anomaly into our electoral system, that if this Bill is passed and a general election takes place between the 1st November and the 1st January in the future, London as against the rest of the country will vote on an entirely different register. Is not that a very remarkable anomaly? One election would be held on an old register and another on a new one. Is not this a new and a strangr anomaly which you are putting into oue system by a Bill which is to get rid of existing anomalies? The Secretary to the Local Government Board associates himself entirely with Clauses 5, 6 and 7. Clause 5 deals with making the regulations for the revising barristers by Orders in Council. Why does he approve of this? The special reason he gives us for thinking that this is a most admirable proposal is that he wants to get the electoral representation of London on the most democratic basis possible.

DR. MACNAMARA: Hear! hear!

*MR. CHAPLIN: Can you tell me how that is consistent with carrying out this arrangement by Orders in Council? What are Orders in Council? They are the orders of the Ministers of the Crown, and I should not be stretching the point or be guilty of undue exaggeration if I said, "The Royal prerogative." That would be the actual effect of it. Yet the hon. Member thinks the best way of establishing the elections of London on an absolutely democratic principle would be by making arrangements for the revising barristers, who are concerned in returning Members to this House, by the exercise of the Royal prerogative. It seems there are still some points in this Bill which hon. Members are now trying to hurry through the House which require rather longer consideration than at all events they are able to get on a Friday afternoon. Let me say one word more with regard to the objections to this Bill. The chief one, of course, is the one that I have stated, when you have to deal with a question of Parliamentary reform in this country, and on which all parties have hitherto been agreed. I am surprised that all parties are not agreed now upon it, but at all events we on this side of the House adhere rigidly to the opinion that in dealing with Parliamentary reform it ought to be dealt with comprehensively as a whole, and the principle applied universally, and not in districts. But there is another objection, which I do not think of less importance. This Bill has been introduced, like the Bill to deal with plural voting two years ago for the purpose of getting rid of anomalies in our electoral system. But the anomalies of the electoral system of this country are innumerable, and can only be dealt with by a universal Bill. What I complain of is this, that as it appears to me, hon. Gentlemen opposite who are supporting this Bill, and who are so anxious on the subject of getting rid of the anomalies of our electoral system, are absolutely blind and their eyes hermetically sealed to every one of the existing anomalies except that particular one, by getting rid of which they think they will derive some considerable advantage. Why is this course being adopted by the Government this session? They adopted, as I think, a very unusual attitude; they pursued, as I think, a very unusual course, last year, or the the year before, before I had the pleasure of coming back again after the general election, with regard to the Plural Voting Bill. It adds to my curiosity to hear what are the views and intentions of the Government with regard to the future progress of this Bill this session I do think after all that has passed upon this subject this afternoon after the suggestion made on this side and the interruption of the right hon. Gentleman on the other side of the House, after he has reminded us of what frequently has been the case of late, that the Government have taken up the Bills of private Members and given them special facilities for passing during the session when they could not have passed without those facilities—then I do say, and I wish to press this upon the right hon. Gentleman, that we are entitled to hear from him, whether that course is in contemplation by the Government. If it is, I do not think that there will be the slightest doubt on the part of those who sit upon this side of the House as to the course it is their duty to pursue, which is to offer the most unbending opposition and resistance to the proposal which is now before us.

*SIR WILLIAM BULL (Hammersmith) said the deprecating air with which the hon. Member brought in his Bill reminded him of the old story of the punctiliously polite Greek nobleman who, while performing the funeral of an infant daughter, felt bound to make his excuses to the spectators for "bringing out such a ridiculously small corpse to so large a crowd." He trusted that the Bill had more vitality than the infant, but on the other hand he thought those who had followed the debate would come to the same conclusion as the President of the Local Government Board, viz., that this was not by any means a small measure, but on the contrary a large and far-reaching one. He would like, from his own experience as an election agent of many years standing, to speak of some of the blanks left in the Bill, and to point out the enormous changes that go on in the register during the year. The introducer of the Bill stated that 10 per cent. of a constituency changed every year, but in the constituency of Hammersmith the change was much greater, and practically one-fourth of the register was altered every twelve months. In the course of the last twenty years his own Party had actually put on the register 22,000 persons—more than the actual total on it to-day. Let them endeavour to realise what that meant and what would be involved if the proposals of the Bill became law. Let them think what the revising barristers would have to do between the 8th September and the 1st November, when the various registers for London would have to be collated into one grand register for the whole of London. It would require a book as large as the London Directory; the register would have to be practically re-written and he would like to ask the President of the Local Government Board if the Treasury had been consulted in regard to this. He understood that by some mistake they were not so consulted in regard to the Criminal Appeal Bill of last year. In his opinion the expense involved by this change would be terrific, and he would like to know if an estimate of the cost had been drawn out. They as guardians of the taxpayers' interest ought to have before them some figures. There was not only the question of the salaries of the Revising Barristers to be considered; there would be the question of collating the registers, and making them perfect. It had been said that some of the registers were very badly kept. He would like to know which registers were thus referred to, for having a fairly good knowledge of the London boroughs he was bound to say he considered that the registers were almost uniformly perfect. He noted that in this Bill, as in the case of the Plural Voting Bill, there was an absence of information as to the manner in which the details were to be worked out, and he thought too they should have in the Schedule a list of the Acts of Parliament affected. He believed hon. Members would be surprised to learn the number of Acts interfered with by this Bill, and seeing that they could not properly digest the measure at such short notice, they ought certainly to be afforded another opportunity of discussing it in detail.

*MR. THORNTON (Clapham) said that in his opinion this ought to be an avowed Government measure, and he desired to appeal to the President of the Local Government Board to tell them frankly whether the Government were going to take up the Bill, and whether they were to have a fair opportunity of fighting out in the House of Commons this proposed great change in the law affecting London, and inferentially the law of the country as a whole. There were many hon. Members who, had they known the real nature of this Bill, would have been only too glad to attend that afternoon and express their opinion upon it. He wished especially to point out that the Bill would deprive some of the Metropolitan boroughs of ancient privileges, which he would indicate as succinctly as possible. It had not been stated in the debate that the Redistribution Bill of 1885 expressly reserved the right of exercising the franchise wherever a voter possessed it outside any of the composite boroughs at that time, either preserved or created. Thus under the ægis of the great Liberal leader, Mr. Gladstone, it had been deliberately determined that while one man could only vote once within two-member boroughs, such as that which he himself partly represented, viz., Battersea and Clapham, yet a property owner retained elsewhere the right of plural voting, provided he possessed valid qualifications. That hon. Members opposite objected to this principle was true, and their objections had to be met; but surely in a measure dealing with the United Kingdom of England and Ireland as a whole, and not with the London area only. Otherwise it should be known how in particular the rights of two of the most ancient and historic boroughs in the country were about to be obliterated by this piecemeal legislation and the whole character of the constituencies of the City of London and Southwark altered. The City doubtless would be able to defend its privileges to good purpose, but he must call attention to the great past of Southwark, whose representatives in the 18th and early 19th centuries included Tierney, Sir Francis Burdett and—he hoped he might be forgiven for naming his own kinsman—Mr. Henry Thorton, who was Member there for 35 years prior to his death in 1815, and would be further remembered as the coadjutor of Wilberforce when striving against the slave trade. Before the Reform Act of 1832 there were only three really working-class boroughs, judged by the test of numbers upon the register, and they were Liverpool, Preston and Southwark, so the great ends and aims connected with the Clapham Sect and Battersea Rise had popular approval. Surely, then, the reversal of the Act of 1885 and the withdrawal of ancient privileges ought not to be accomplished except in a complete scheme of redistribution. At present they had glaring inequalities within the Metropolitan area, as had been shown by the hon. Baron the Member for Wandsworth, so that the Brobdignag of Wandsworth co-existed with the Lilliput of Whitechapel. Unless anomalies such as these were corrected, any electoral reform must be imperfect and unjust. Moreover it should be remembered that since 1430 and the time of Henry VI, no disfranchising measure had passed through the British Parliament. On that occasion the franchise was limited to forty-shilling freeholders, because Henry IV. in his efforts to gain popularity had too much lowered the vote. But these facts were only adduced to emphasise the necessity for a general reconsideration of the electoral question at issue which should be dealt with as a whole. Hence his request to the Government and especially to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Battersea, for a promise to be allowed to fight the matter out on the floor of the House.

*Mr. NIELD (Middlesex, Ealing) said that when one remembered that the Liberal Party, as late as 1885, deliberately broke up large London boroughs which formerly existed—boroughs like Chelsea, Finsbury and Hackney—which had enormous populations, and the task of fighting which was rendered almost prohibitive by reason of the expense involved—when they remembered that the Liberals deliberately broke up these boroughs into twenty-eight boroughs, it seems to him that everyone who had the constitutional interests of the country at heart should strongly protest against the introduction, in this manner, of a measure of such wide and far-reaching importance as the one they were now discussing—a measure which proposed to destroy the electoral machinery set up in the County of London by the Liberal Government in 1885. They knew how, under the able guidance of the First Commissioner of Works in 1906, the Government by the use of that engine of oppression, the closure, passed a Plural Voters Bill, which they sent up to the other Chamber in such a hectoring and intolerant spirit, and which the House of Lo ds promiscuously rejected, thereby showing that they would not be a party to gerrymandering the register. They knew also that the attempt of the Government to inflame public passion against that House made no impression whatever on the country. Yet here they had another attempt, due no doubt to the fact that right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite, as well as the Party managers, know that they had lost the confidence of the country. Hon. Members opposite ought to be aware that by subscribing to measures of this sort they must inevitably destroy the position they had achieved for themselves. He wondered if ever in the history of the House on the first private Members' day of the session, there had been such an array of right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench to support such a Bill as this. He congratulated the Member for North St. Pancras on being able, with the aid of the Government, to bring this Bill forward, but he hoped the country would realise that the Radical Government caused the debate on the Address to be closured at an extremely early date in order that they might jockey into position a measure of this nature. What was the anomaly that they proposed to remove ? They proposed to make this great change in the law because they said the County of London was so large that it needed to be treated as one entity. Now that was certainly not the opinion of the right hon. Gentlemen's predecessors, when they deliberately broke up the big London boroughs. They sought to justify this great change, because they said many men lost their right to vote simply by moving from one borough to another. Yet at the same time they were going to create still greater anomalies, and residents in the borough of Hammersmith moving in some instances across the road, or a few score yards into his constituency would find it necessary to re-qualify, while if they moved to the other side of the County of London, say to Stoke Newington or to Woolwich, they would retain their qualification, though the distance they had moved would (with the up-to-date methods of communication and conveyance), take them an hour to traverse.

MR. DICKINSON rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put;" but Mr. Speaker withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.

* MR. NIELD, continuing, declared there was absolutely nothing to justify the introduction of this Bill, and submitted that such anomalies as there were in the existing state of things, must remain until they were removed by a general Bill.

And it being Five of the Clock, Mr. SPEAKER proceeded to interrupt the Business:—

Whereupon Mr. DICKINSON rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put;" but Mr. Speaker withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question, and the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

Whereupon Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to Standing Order No. 3.

Adjourned at two minutes after Five o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 10th February, 1908.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :—Norwich Union Fire Insurance Society [H.L.]; Llanelly Gas [H.L.]; Pontypridd Water [H.L.]; Rhymney and Aber Valleys Gas and Water [H.L.].

Also the Certificates that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :—Metropolitan Electric Tramways; Interoceanic Railway of Mexico.

And also the Certificate that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have not been complied with :—Ards and Bangor Railways.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Ammanford Urban District Council Water Bill [H.L.]; Audenshaw and Saddleworth Urban District Councils Bill [H.L.]; Bristol Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Briton Ferry Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Camberwell and other Metropolitan Borough Councils (Superannuation) Bill [H.L.]; Herne Bay Pier Bill [H.L.]; Huddersfield Water Bill [H.L.]; Keighley Corporation Bill [H.L.]; London and District Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.]; Magee Presbyterian College (Londonderry) Bill [H.L.]; Merthyr Tydfil Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Monmouthshire County Council Bill [H.L.]; Skegness Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Swansea Valley Gas Bill [H.L.]; Wath-upon-Dearne Urban District Council Gas Bill [H.L.].—Read 2^a.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

CHILDREN'S BILL.

Tables of comparison between the provisions of the Bill and existing enactments.

JUDICIAL STATISTICS, ENGLAND AND WALES, 1906. (PART I., CRIMINAL STATISTICS).

Statistics relating to criminal proceedings, police, coroners, prisons, reformatory and industrial schools, and criminal lunatics, for the year 1906.

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3956. Colombia.

No. 3957. Spain.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

NAVY (DISCIPLINE—PRISONS).

Rules and Regulations, dated 18th January, 1908, amending Regulations for Naval Prisons.

SUPERANNUATION (TREASURY MINUTES).

Dated 28th January, 1908, granting a special pension to Sir Mackenzie Dalzell Chalmers, K.C.B., C.S.I., late Permanent Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department.

Dated 6th February, 1908, granting a retired allowance to Mr. George McEvey, Civil Assistant, Ordnance Survey, Board of Agriculture and Fisheries.

DESTRUCTIVE INSECTS AND PESTS ACTS, 1877 AND 1907—ORDERS.

Dated 29th November, 1907, entitled "American Gooseberry Mildew (Prohibition of Importation of Bushes) Order of 1907."

Dated 10th December, 1907, entitled "The American Gooseberry Mildew Order of 1907."

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY INSURANCE COMPANIES ACT, 1907.

Board of Trade Rules (Employers' Liability Insurance Companies).

Board of Trade Rules (Underwriters).

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

AUGMENTATION OF BENEFICES ACT, 1863.

Return of proceedings under the Lord-Chancellor's Augmentation Act since the same came into operation (1st November, 1863) up to and inclusive of 7th February, 1908.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. (No. 6.)

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS MANUSCRIPTS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Calendar of the Manuscripts of the House of Lords, Volume IV. (New Series), with an appendix, in continuation of the volumes issued under the authority of the Historical Manuscripts Commission. The same was ordered to be printed. (No. 7.)

NEW BILLS.

PATENTS AND DESIGN BILL [H.L.] (No. 8).

A Bill to explain section 92 of the Patents and Designs Act, 1907; and

FATAL ACCIDENTS (DAMAGES) (No. 2) BILL [H.L.] (No. 9).

A Bill to amend the law with respect to the assessment of damages under the Fatal Accidents Acts.

Were presented by the Lord Granard (*E. Granard*); read 1^a, and to be printed.

BLACK SCAB AND FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE.

*LORD HARRIS: My Lords, I beg to ask His Majesty's Government whether the Board of Agriculture is taking any, and, if so, what steps to prevent, under the Destructive Insects and Pests Act, 1907, the spread of the new and destructive potato disease known as black scab. I hope the President of the Board will be able to assure me that he is prepared to take drastic action in the case of this vegetable pest.

Last year I asked the noble Earl a question upon another important matter to agriculturists—I refer to the disease called gooseberry mildew. At that time he did not seem to think the matter of very great importance, and was not prepared to take legislative power. But in the course of the year I think he must have found that my information was superior to that of his Department, for he did take steps to pass, and succeeded in passing, the Act to which I refer in my Question. Unfortunately, however, the executive action under that measure has not been successful. The Department has been far too tender, and I am informed, on excellent authority, that the pest is spreading in the most alarming way. I am told that there are now 1,000 consecutive acres affected in Cambridgeshire alone. The measures that the noble Earl has taken have failed in this way. The Government give no assistance towards compensation for destruction, which is the only possible way of getting rid of the pest. The county councils, I suppose, think it is not fair to the ratepayers that they should find the whole of the compensation, nd the cultivator naturally defers destruction until the very last moment, when probably it is too late.

The pest to which I refer to-night—that known as black scab—is just as dangerous, if not more so; and the danger is imminent for this reason, that I am informed it has spread at last to Scotland, from which the best seed is usually obtained. If seed is to be disseminated all over the country with this pest in it, the risk of spreading the disease is very serious. I understand that, in the case of cattle diseases, such as the outbreak of foot and mouth disease in Scotland, the Agricultural Department does contribute towards the compensation for destruction. If that is the case in connection with animal pests, why should it not be done in the case of vegetable pests? I am certain that, unless the noble Earl takes drastic action, this vegetable pest to which I am now directing his attention will spread all over the country. Already the English black-currant has almost disappeared from England altogether, the present variety being a French variety. We have had the gooseberry attacked and now the potato, and in view of the present policy of small holdings the importance of these matters is very great. Therefore, I suggest that it is as reasonable for the Department to give assistance towards compensation to small farmers for the destruction of these pests, as it is for them to give assistance to the larger farmers when their cattle have to be destroyed.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES (Earl CARRINGTON): My Lords, it is the case that the potato disease called the black scab, to which attention has been called by the noble Lord, is in existence. It was first observed in 1901, and was imported, I believe, from the Continent. It has since spread over the whole of the North-west of England and the North of Wales; it is prevalent in Lancashire, and cases have been reported from Scotland and the Midlands; but, so far, it has not appeared in the South and the East of England. Your Lordships were good enough to give me very drastic powers under the Destructive Insects and Pests Act of last year, and I can assure the House that my Department are fully sensible of the danger of this new potato disease and will do the best they can to stop it. We have been considering whether it would not be right to issue immediately an order giving power to deal with this pest. These diseases are not very much understood as yet, but we shall at once introduce black scab into the Order. I do not think I need follow the noble Lord into the question he raised about compensation. If he will bring it up on some future occasion, I shall be very glad to argue it out with him. As he also mentioned the outbreak of foot and mouth disease, perhaps I may be permitted to assure the House that, so far as we know, the disease has been entirely confined to the area where it broke out. Almost all the cattle have been already slaughtered, and there are great hopes, owing to the promptness with which the officials of the Board have tackled this serious outbreak, that it will not be extended.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: My Lords, I am sure the statement of the noble Earl that active steps have been taken to confine the foot and mouth disease to the part of the country in which it broke out is most gratifying; but I should like to ask him, in the interests of agriculture as a whole, if he can give the House any idea as to how the disease first originated, and whether the origin has been traced to any other part of the country.

EARL CARRINGTON: I think its origin has been traced, but we are not absolutely certain. In these circumstances, I hope the noble Marquess will forgive me if I do not make any further statement to-day.

THE ANGLO-RUSSIAN AGREEMENT.

Order of the Day read for resuming the adjourned debate on the Motion of the Lord Curzon of Kedleston that an humble Address be presented to His Majesty for Papers respecting the Convention recently concluded with the Russian Government relating to the respective interests of Great Britain and Russia in Persia, Afghanistan, and Thibet.

***LORD SANDERSON**: My Lords, the noble Lord who initiated this discussion on the Convention with Russia is a practised and eloquent speaker, to whom one always listens with pleasure. I have not that advantage. For forty-seven years of my life I have sedulously cultivated the art of holding my peace, even from good words; and I shall not venture on this occasion to do more than address to your Lordships, as briefly as I can, the few observations which have been suggested to me as a result of a rather prolonged official experience.

For many years successive Foreign Secretaries have been attacked for making no serious effort to come to a general understanding with Russia in regard to the policy of the two empires in the various parts of Asia in which they are interested. I do not think that at any time the fault has been with the Government here. The difficulty has been at St. Petersburg, where the dominant political party has been unwilling to fetter itself by positive engagements except on terms that would have been unacceptable to us. They have preferred to let matters slide under the conviction that events were working in their favour, and that they had something to gain, and at all events nothing to lose, by delay. It is only recently that there has been a change in this respect, and whatever criticisms may be passed on the details of the Convention, it is, at all events, satisfactory as an indication that the Russian Government have been led to believe that it is to their advantage as well as to ours that the two countries should endeavour to work in harmony rather than in a condition of constant rivalry and at times of only half-suppressed antagonism.

The Convention is of necessity a compromise, and a compromise is rarely at first sight attractive to either of the parties interested. It cannot ordinarily be attained, as so many people seem to suppose, by generously conceding whatever you think unimportant, while carefully retaining everything to which you attach any real value. As Lord Granville once tersely put it—

> "It is of no use going to market unless you put some eggs in your basket."

We have obtained in this Convention positive and permanent engagements in regard to Persia and Afghanistan which the Russian Government have hitherto been unwilling to give except in the form of rather fluid assurances in the course of correspondence and conversations. It is true that these assurances have been frequently repeated, but it is also the fact that the Russian Government have quite candidly stated that they must be regarded as subject to modification under change of circumstances. The mere fact of repeated renewal is an indication of the temporary nature of the assurances. One does not constantly renew a permanent engagement. It stands to reason that we were bound to offer in return similar engagements sufficient to induce the Russian Government to enter willingly into the bargain and to abide by it strictly and unreservedly. The whole value of such an agreement depends on the spirit in which it is observed.

The arrangement with regard to reserved zones of interest in Persia, which has been so sharply criticised, has no doubt been so framed as to offer such an inducement. Some of my colleagues and I once explained to a former Prime Minister the line which, in the opinion of British experts, divided Northern from Southern Persia. He looked at the map and observed—

> "Well, gentlemen, I do not wish to dispute your superior knowledge, but to an uninstructed mind Persia seems to have a remarkably high waist."

That line has not been followed on the present occasion, and most of us may think that the waist of Persia has been put too low.

But there seems to be a good deal of misconception as to the real nature and effect of this part of the Agreement. In the first place, it does not protect either Government from the competition of other countries in any part of Persia. No one is bound by the arrangement except the two parties themselves. In the second place, both Powers have bound themselves to the principle of equal opportunities for the commerce and trade of all nations. There can, therefore, be no question of differential tolls or charges in any concessions obtained from the Persian Government by either of them. Thirdly, all existing concessions are expressly maintained by Article III. of the Convention, and British subjects and companies already possess several valuable concessions within the Russian zone. Fourthly, although it is true that this country is bound not to oppose Russian applications for concessions within what I may call the neutral zone, the Russian Government are equally bound not to oppose British applications for concessions within that zone. In the event of rival applications the two Governments will be bound to come to an understanding, instead of proceeding on the detestable system of secretly working against each other. The arrangement is, in fact, an expansion of one concluded by the late Lord Salisbury in 1899, with regard to the railway interests of Great Britain and Russia in China. I have never heard complaints that that Agreement had operated disastrously for British railway enterprise in the districts affected by it, and I cannot help thinking that the gloomy anticipations which have been expressed as to the results of the present arrangement are somewhat exaggerated.

Russian commercial enterprise in the North of Persia has always had a considerable advantage over all competitors from the fact, not only that Russia by her geographical position has the power of exercising great political pressure at Teheran, but that the Russian Government has been always ready to spend large sums of money from the Imperial Treasury in aid of such enterprise. The Russian Government have guaranteed large loans, they have established a bank at Teheran, with the Russian State Bank at its back, and they have spent several hundred thousand pounds on the construction of roads from the Russian frontier and from the Caspian to the capital and into the interior. Such a policy is contrary to our practice and tradition. The Treasury have never been willing to incur pecuniary liability on account of Persia, and it was only with difficulty that they were induced for a few years to obtain from Parliament a very moderate subsidy in support of the steam packet service on the Karun. The Foreign Office has been expected to turn out a full tale of bricks with the most beggarly allowance of straw. We have constantly been abused for apathy and indifference when it really seemed to me surprising that we have managed so well as we have. I do not suppose that our financial policy will be materially altered in that respect, and so long as it is maintained I am not at all sure that British commercial enterprise will suffer seriously by being concentrated on the development of existing concessions, and on such new undertakings as may present themselves in the field still open to it.

It has been asked why the Convention contains no provision recognising the special position and interests of Great Britain in the Persian Gulf. If I may be allowed to speak as an aged official with considerable experience in the preparation of such documents, I should say that this matter was not very suitable for insertion in a Convention. The special interests of Great Britain in the Gulf are matters of fact, but they are not very easy to define, the less so because they seem to me to be always expanding, and definition might be found to operate by way of limitation. I see in Sir Edward Grey's despatch a statement that His Majesty's Government will continue to direct all their efforts to the preservation of the *status quo* on and in the Gulf. That is an announcement quite suitable in a despatch, and it has a general broad meaning which is quite sufficient. But I do not envy anyone the task of defining accurately the territorial *status quo* of the shores of the Persian Gulf in a manner that would be acceptable to the parties immediately concerned. I believe it to be incapable of accomplishment. I do not see how the Government could ask Russia to accept as fixed that which is really in a state of flux and development; and experience has shown that engagements by one or two Powers to abstain from certain modes of action or intervention in seas or on coasts which are open of access to other Powers not parties to the arrangement are apt to be very inconvenient and embarrassing.

Well, my Lords, in the presence of so many ex-Viceroys of India, and ex-Governors of Indian Presidencies, your Lordships will not expect me to have the audacity to discourse to you on the subject of Afghanistan. I leave that subject to others better qualified.

In regard to Tibet, I will only say that, however distant the Russian frontier may be from that country, Russia has undoubtedly the means of exercising considerable influence there, not necessarily in a manner conducive to our interests; it is surely a matter of ordinary prudence that we should come to an arrangement to avoid the risk of antagonistic influence in a region where we desire to avoid any necessity for active intervention. The noble Lord has, I think, done a real service in subjecting the critical Convention to critical examination, and eliciting explanations on many points on which explanations were desirable. I may be biassed in favour of my former Department, but after listening to the discussion I do not see much reason to fear that any of the provisions of this Agreement will operate seriously to our detriment.

We are however, I think, agreed that the Agreement should be judged as a whole, and viewed in that light it has great claims to be regarded with favour. It is an endeavour on the part of two Great Western Powers most interested in Asia to put aside small jealousies and suspicions, to come to an agreement on points on which there is danger of conflicting policies, and to work together in the cause of progress and civilisation. It is to this, and not to any previous assurances or to any specific engagements in the Convention that I attribute the fact that the two Powers have been able to adopt a united attitude during the recent disturbances in Persia. If that happy disposition continues it may save both countries much anxiety and expense, and I hope I shall not be considered too romantic if I add that it may largely increase their influence for good. For such objects it is worth while to make considerable sacrifices, and I cannot think that those actually made in the Convention are excessive.

VISCOUNT MIDLETON: My Lords, I am sure it has given your Lordships great pleasure to listen to the speech which has just been delivered by the noble Lord, whose great knowledge has been placed at the disposal of successive Foregn Secretaries to the great advantage of the country. The weight of opinion, especially of Indian opinion, in this House is so great—it has been illustrated, not merely in this debate, but in the debate initiated by Lord Ampthill last week, in which for the first time, I presume, in the whole history of this Assembly five Members of the House who had filled the office of Viceroy and the ex-Commander-in-Chief in India were heard—that it is difficult to rise and take part in this discussion; and I should certainly have felt absolved from troubling your Lordships even for a few moments to-night had it not been for the speech which was delivered by the noble Lord the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs in the course of the debate on Thursday.

I do not think anybody would be surprised that the Under-Secretary should have entrenched himself as far as he possibly could in replying to the very powerful indictment which was levelled against the Convention, and it was also most natural, I think, that so far as was possible the noble Lord should have relied upon the opinions left on the records of the late Government. In principle, I think every member of the late Government would be ready to give assent to the course which has been taken by the present Government. But in detail I think the noble Lord carried us, or attempted to carry us, a little too far. and I am not sure that he would not have had even a stronger position if he had relied more than he did on the general difficulty of concluding such a Convention at all, on which something has just been said by the noble Lord on the cross benches. Any one who discusses this question must do so from the standpoint that in politics, especially in Asia, the great nations are drawing closer together, the opportunities of attack and of collision have become greater in each successive decade, and unquestionably the effects of that change are far-reaching; and, if I may venture to go a step further, I would say that especially is that the case between this country and Russia.

Russia has been for a long time an advancing nation in Asia. On the other hand, it was said with great force on Thursday last that it can be a proud boast that for 150 years we have not taken a strip of territory in Persia, or indeed, in Afghanistan. The Russians, again, regard the marching forward of their outposts as a strength. The tendency of late years on our part has been to consolidate that which we have already, and to regard expansion in some cases rather as a weakness than as a strength. I might go a step further and say that, whatever the internal conditions in Russia, money has never been wanting to back what may be thought necessary in regard to extension; while in regard to the Indian Exchequer, every rupee taken away from the growing needs of India in education, in railways, in public works or in sanitation, has had to be accounted for to the House of Commons. Between two nations taking such a very different view of their responsibilities and national interest, it is not difficult to see that to come to any accommodation at all on such a point would not be very easy.

From my own comparatively small experience I can corroborate what fell from the noble Lord. When I went to the Foreign Office in 1898 the mind of the late Lord Salisbury was much set on coming to some arrangement with the Russian Government with regard to Asia; when I left the India Office seven years later, although that wish had been as much if not more in the mind of Lord Lansdowne, I do not think it could be said that we had come within sight of any such agreement. When the noble Lord opposite said practically in terms that if we had attempted any further demands it might have proved fatal to any Agreement at all, I could not help remembering the principle to which Lord Salisbury held very strongly—that in such an Agreement we must keep our eyes solely on what concerns this country, and must not turn too critical an eye on the benefit which might be obtained by some body else, unless that benefit was obtained at our expense. If we could keep that in view, it not inconsiderably clears the issue.

In international matters I would submit that we cannot draw up a commercial balance sheet. I remember, if I may give an illustration, that a gentleman whose estate very lately contributed to the rapacity of the Chancellor of the Exchequer one of the largest sums which has been given in the lifetime of anybody here, once told me how he considered his fortune had been built up, and it had some bearing on this question. He said—

> "If I can make a fair profit, I do not jeopardise it by attempting always to get the highest price. If I insisted on the highest price, I should lose my market, and in half my ventures I should fail. When you have safeguarded your own interest do not trouble yourself if someone else is going to make a profit."

I think we may apply that principle to these treaties. With regard to the French Treaty, I do not doubt that if we were closely to scan its various provisions we could find a good deal to say as to who had scored the advantage. But I believe that the feeling of this country and of this House would be at this moment to take the broader view. The French Treaty has cleared our way in one sphere and has cleared the way of the French Government in another, and if there is any balance in favour of one or against the other, it has been more than compensated by the increased good feeling between the two countries, by the cessation of irritating episodes, and by the cordial co-operation of the two countries in other spheres of action.

But even admitting that we may look at this Convention from that standpoint, I think the Under-Secretary carried us too far. Look at the question which he put to us with regard to Persia. Lord Fitzmaurice said, very truly, that there had been previous negotiations, or rather proposals, for they hardly amounted to negotiations, with regard to a strip of territory to be secured to this country in Persia as against foreign enterprise; and from that he proceeded to argue that, a similar boundary having been adopted for that purpose, His Majesty's Government were not making a bad bargain in taking that boundary for the purpose of this Convention. Well, I really think that was straining the analogy.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord FITZMAURICE): I also pointed out that when that proposal was made, it was part of a proposal under which a very considerable sum of money would have been advanced, at the cost of this country or of India, to the Persian Government, but that we have obtained it as an arrangement with Russia without any loan transaction at all.

VISCOUNT MIDLETON: The question is whether that sum of money bore any relation whatever to the concessions which have had to be made to Russia in order to secure similar concessions to ourselves. The noble Lord has really made my argument for me. Let us look at the fact——

LORD FITZMAURICE: The abandonment of that loan to Persia was never brought in as a matter of pounds, shillings and pence, in connection with this Agreement. We have now obtained, as part of this arrangement, a boundary viewed very favourably by the Departmental Committee to which I alluded, and which was originally proposed as part of a series of loan transactions, the abandonment of which as a matter of principle we consider to be a good thing, because the whole of that policy of loan transactions in which Russia and Great Britain competed in Persia has not, we consider, been in any way justified by the results.

VISCOUNT MIDLETON: As between ourselves and Russia the arrangement proposed was unilateral and not bilateral. We were to obtain something, in consideration of an advance to Persia, which would ensure for us good relations with Persia at the moment. But there was no question then of the concession of any other sphere. There was no question of the trade routes or the loss of trade, there was no question of establishing a more dominant position for any other power at Teheran, still less was there a question of giving a large strip of country over which, it must certainly be argued, there will be a tendency to advance railways which may come to the Gulf. Let us consider the difference between the former and the present situation. The boundary was not the whole of the former proposal; it was the irreducible minimum without which it was not considered by the late Government that it would be well for us to involve ourselves even in a loan for a moderate amount to Persia. But that irreducible minimum is now given to us at a time when seven out of the eleven trade routes, and eleven out of the twelve chief towns, are being handed over to Russian influence, and when, if it is desirable that the Persian Gulf should not be connected with the north by railways, the power of entering any protest against such action has to a large extent passed out of the hands of the British Government. That is a totally different bargain from that which was formerly proposed. The best we can say for the arrangement is that we have paid a heavy sum by way of insurance for what I hope will be future peace and good working with the Russian Government.

Then I turn to Tibet. There have been strong differences of opinion as to the precise value to this country of the trade in Tibet, and also of the sacrifices which might be entailed upon us by it. I do not propose to enter into that discussion to-night. All I will say is this, that considering the differences between the Russian frontier and our own, and considering the commercial interests which I understand have been reserved to us, to put Russia in the future absolutely on a par with this country seems to be a concession susceptible, at all events, to some diplomatic compensation in another quarter. But I look in vain for such a diplomatic compensation in the arrangement regarding Afghanistan. The desire of the Ameer and of his father apparently has been to keep Afghanistan clear of external and international politics, as far as possible. We have joined warmly in the view of His Majesty's Government, that so far as possible Afghanistan should be impervious to outside influences, and so far as the negative part of the Agreement goes, as it effects ourselves, I do not think the noble Lord will find much criticism.

But this self-denying ordinance, whether in the negative or positive part, appears to us to be somewhat one-sided. We have guaranteed the integrity of Afghanistan, and how to carry out that guarantee has been the subject of grave consideration by our military experts and statesmen. At this moment we are in a position which must be apparent to the whole world. We are guaranteeing a nation which has none of the usual advantages which are necessary to protect it—there are no railways, no ports, no stores, and scarcely any telegraphs. Under these circumstances, to talk of making Afghanistan a *place d'armes* is out of the question. But the Russian Government for years have made preparations for carrying on any campaign that might be necessary. If we are bound in such a way that any movement of ours, any attempt to prepare Afghanistan against a common enemy, would be regarded as an unfriendly act, there should have been some reciprocal undertaking from Russia in regard to her Asiatic territories.

The same thing may be said with regard to the commercial agreement. We are to enter into correspondence with Russia if any question arises as to commercial agents. But such a correspondence is not always an easy matter, because commercial and scientific expeditions have been for many years past almost the recognised mode of commencing political relations. Therefore, I cannot help wishing that throughout these negotiations in regard to Afghanistan the statement which the Russian Government have made over and over again and which has been quoted in this country continually—namely, that Afghanistan is outside the sphere of Russian influence—had been hung up in red letters in the Foreign Office as the guiding principle upon which such concessions should be made. However much sympathy noble Lords on this side of the House may have with the general scope of the Convention, we cannot help having doubts and misgivings as to the actual manner in which it has been carried out, though I hope these will not be regarded as proceeding from any lack of patriotism or from any Party considerations.

We recognise the objects of His Majesty's Government as identical with our own. However much we may regret that the Persian Gulf is left outside the scope of the Convention, we take note of the language used by Lord Fitzmaurice as being as firm and direct upon that point as was the well-known utterance of the noble Marquess behind me (Lord Lansdowne), to which we rigidly adhere. We recognise also that in all these details, local feelings and local considerations must to some extent give way to the wider effects of foreign policy, and how necessary it is in concluding a Convention at all to keep our eyes, not merely on the present, but on the future. Perhaps the agreement between the two sides on this question is a greater national asset than any in our foreign policy during the past twenty years. We have had a great increase in our territory, our armaments, and in the solidarity of our Colonies and Empire generally, but I submit that these would have been useless if not accompanied by that putting aside of Party in foreign matters which has been the greatest change within our recollection.

Thirty years ago I remember, while standing on the steps of the Throne, hearing a debate on Afghanistan in which the noble Marquess who sits opposite took part, and in which there was apparently the same bitter feeling existing between the two Parties as prevailed at that time on almost every question of foreign politics in the Near and Far East. I believe that door of difference is closed. We hope it is permanently closed. We realise, even if we cannot agree in all the details, that a great step forward has been taken by this Agreement in the direction of those understandings and alliances which were happily inaugurated by the late Foreign Secretary; and I trust His Majesty's Government will acquit us of any desire to take a narrow view of the Convention if we cannot agree with all the details, just as we acquit them of not having taken a wide view. We fully recognise that they have taken the widest view, even though they have had to make concessions which in some respects we regret; and I believe there is no Party in this country, least of all those who sit on this Bench, who, having regard to the great issues which are at stake in the matter, will not use this Convention to the very best advantage for the national safety and for the security of our Eastern Possessions, hoping that what we have conceded may at least have the effect of binding us more closely to our neighbours, and securing so far the peace of the world.

*LORD REAY: My Lords, I wish to make a few observations on this very important Treaty. In the first place, a question has been raised with regard to our trade relations with Persia. Our trade relations with Persia have been placed on an absolutely secure footing by the Treaty of 9th February, 1903. By that Treaty we have obtained the same right as the Russians to object to any alteration to our detriment in the Persian tariff. That was a right which we did not possess under the Anglo-Persian Treaty of 1857. Therefore, as regards our trade we are in exactly the same position as Russia, and this Treaty does not alter any facilities or rights we have under existing Treaties. The ordinary trade of the country will continue as at present.

With regard to the line of demarcation of the Russian sphere, as has been pointed out in his speech by the noble Lord who represents the Foreign Office, the line simply acknowledges existing facts. There is no concession made and no advantage gained which is not already, to a certain extent, at all events, possessed by Russia; and the line of demarcation of our sphere gives us what is most essential to our interests. The argument has been used that Russia can extend her railways to the West of Bandar Abbas, but what prevents us, in case Russia is making railways from Teheran either to Yezd or to Ispahan, from obtaining concessions which will link up at Yezd and Ispahan the railways in the South under our control. Obviously the whole question of construction of railways will be one for further negotiation, for further consideration by our Government, by the Russian Government, and by the Persian Government, and in any case the development of the Persian railway system will be to the advantage of Persia. As for the idea that the extension of the Bagdad railway should necessarily be under our control, I do not think that has ever been contemplated. The fact mentioned by my noble friend Lord Fitzmaurice, that the Imperial Bank of Persia approves of the Treaty, seems to me to be very important. I was pleased to hear from the noble Viscount who has just sat down, that with regard to the Persian Gulf, he fully accepts the declaration which was made by the Government, and in that respect there is absolute unanimity of opinion that our position should be maintained. The unsettled state of affairs in Persia indicates the great value of a definite settlement with Russia of our relative spheres of influence and excludes friction at Teheran which has been so mischeivous in the past.

I now approach the question of Afghanistan. The Treaty, in Article I., gives us with regard to Afghanistan an engagement by Russia that it is outside her sphere of influence, that all her political relations shall be conducted through the intermediary of His Majesty's Government, and that Russia will not send any agents into Afghanistan. It has been contended that this is not a concession on the part of Russia because declarations to that effect were often reiterated before. As my noble friend Lord Sanderson has pointed out, the very fact that these declarations were reiterated shows of what advantage it is that at last they have been embodied in such a form in a Treaty that it will not be necessary in future to elicit further declarations on the subject, and it is quite clear that any departure from these pledges by Russia which we need hardly contemplate would constitute a state of things which would absolve us from any obligation we may have undertaken in the Treaty, and would set us completely free in order to deal with the defence of Afghanistan in accordance with our pledges.

Lord Reay.

Then I come to the provision, in Article III., for the settlement of local questions of a non-political character. Those questions are the result of the conditions on the frontier of Afghanistan and Russia, where cultivation on both sides gives rise to disputes about irrigation, grazing and cattle thieving; and it is clear that these questions can be better dealt with by local officials. The sooner they are settled on the spot the less likelihood there is of further complications arising. Obviously, if they degenerated into something more serious, then the local officials would ask for instructions from the Ameer, who would either send instructions which would settle the dispute or if need be refer to us for assistance in their settlement. The character of the region on the Russo-Afghan frontier is entirely different from that on our frontier, where we have to deal with turbulent tribes and a mountainous district, and where, if difficulties arise, they are generally of a nature which makes it desirable that they should be dealt with by the Ameer; and they are not, as a rule, disputes which can be settled by local officials. There is nothing in the Treaty, however, which prevents the Indian Government from making an arrangement with the Ameer that minor disputes should also be settled by the local officials.

With regard to the question of trade, the tariff of Afghanistan is of rather a primitive nature, and we know that the great impediment to trade consists in the prescriptive right of towns in Afghanistan to levy octroi duties, of which they make considerable use, and it is not likely that those duties will for the present disappear. A certain duty is levied on each camel, and an additional *ad valorem* duty on the goods carried which varies. Any trade advantages we may obtain will be enjoyed by Russia, and it is obvious that any advantages Russia may obtain will accrue to us. With regard to the admission of commercial agents, the Treaty distinctly says that the Ameer's sovereign rights are safeguarded. Therefore if the Ameer does not wish these agents to be appointed, there are no means under the Treaty to force them on Afghanistan; but if, on the other hand, the Ameer concedes to Russia the introduction of such agents, then under the

Treaty we obtain the right to be consulted, and therefore it can only be done under an agreement with us. It seems to me that the Treaty fully safeguards the interests of both the Ameer and of ourselves in the matter. I cannot see that the Ameer has any reason to object to this Treaty, which gives him every security and leaves his sovereign rights untouched; and I cannot conceive how it could have been possible to make the Ameer a third party to the Agreement. It was essential that any negotiations with Russia had to be conducted between the Russian Government and ourselves, and that we could not consult the Ameer, who, under an Agreement which dates from the year 1880, is, as regards his foreign policy, to follow the advice of the British Government, and if ever there was a question in which that advice should be accepted, surely it is in a matter of such vital importance to Afghanistan as an amicable adjustment of our relations with Russia.

Now with regard to Tibet, it has been asked what interest Russia had in Tibet. I may, perhaps, refer to a Despatch from the noble Marquess the late Foreign Secretary to Sir Charles Scott of 8th April, 1903. In that Despatch Count Benckendorff stated that Russia "regarded Tibet as forming a part of the Chinese Empire, in the integrity of which they took an interest, and he hoped that there was no question of any action on our part in regard to Tibet which might have the effect of raising questions of this kind." Now, if Russia takes an interest in the integrity of China, certainly our interest in the integrity of that country is not less; and if the Treaty establishes with regard to the integrity of China an identical policy between this country and Russia, it may be considered a very great, and I should say, an additional advantage. There is the further question of the Buddhist pilgrims. There is no doubt that there was a possibility that the pilgrimages might be used for political ends. Such intrigues are, by this Treaty, prohibited, because the Treaty distinctly states that Buddhists may enter into direct relations on strictly religious matters with the Dalai Lama and the other representatives of Buddhism in Tibet, but that the Governments of Great Britain and Russia engage, as far as they are concerned, not to allow those relations to infringe the stipulations of the present arrangement. Besides, I do not see how it would have been possible for us to interfere with these pilgrims, and it is well-known that Russian policy is identical with our policy, namely, to protect the interests of its subjects in any country to which they may be going.

As to our trade with Tibet, the Treaty distinctly maintains any commercial privileges given to us by former Treaties with Tibet and China, and it secures direct relations between the British commercial agents and the Tibetan authorities. Under Article II. of the Convention between Great Britain and Tibet, of 7th September, 1904, a free right of access is secured to markets at Gyantre and Gartok as well as Yatung, and, in addition to establishing trade marts at the places mentioned, the Tibetan Government undertakes to place no restrictions on the trade by existing routes, and to consider the question of establishing fresh trade marts under similar conditions of development if trade requires it. Therefore it is quite clear, under Article II. of this Treaty that the trade privileges we have under the Treaties with Tibet and with China are perfectly guaranteed, and that the situation remains exactly what it was under those Treaties. It is true that the Treaty excludes representatives in Lhassa, but that is in accordance with the policy of the late Government. It would clearly not be to our advantage to have a Resident at Lhassa, who would be confronted by the Chinese Amban, and complications might, therefore, arise which are avoided by our dealing direct with China in any negotiations.

As to the declaration with respect to our occupation of the Chumbi Valley, I cannot see that it is derogatory to our dignity. We are, in fact, only repeating a declaration which we had already made, and we are in that respect doing exactly what the Russian Government did in reiterating its declarations about Afghanistan. If it was not derogatory to the dignity of Russia to make these declarations, I do not see how it is derogatory to our dignity that we should simply have reaffirmed a former pledge.

I admit that it is not difficult to criticise this Treaty. Nothing is easier than to say that you could have made a better Treaty, but the question is whether, if we had insisted on more favourable conditions, we should have obtained any Treaty at all; and I venture to ask your Lordships whether the fact of having a Treaty with Russia is not of such importance that the great result which has been attained is well worth any concessions which may have been made. For years statesmen here, and also perhaps in Russia, in a minor degree as was pointed out by Lord Sanderson, have been of opinion that for both countries it was almost imperative to come to some friendly understanding. Those who have been connected in any way with the Government of India know, as the noble Viscount pointed out, what the result was of the constant apprehension of Russian aggressiveness with regard to our policy in India. Therefore we can give a cordial welcome to a situation in which we shall no longer be watching on either side of the frontier with a feeling of rivalry and suspicion whatever is done on the other side of the frontier; and if this Treaty is carried out in the spirit in which it is concluded, it will have a most beneficial influence on Asia, half of which was kept in a state of suspense by this irritating and dangerous friction. Moreover, there is no doubt that the tension which existed in our relations with Russia in regard to Asia had a reflex action of a most detrimental character on international relations in Europe. I think, therefore, that we have every reason to approve of this Treaty which initiates a new era in the conduct of our foreign relations, not only in Asia, but also elsewhere.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My Lords, the speeches we have heard to-night and those we listened to last week have differed very widely as to the merits of this particular Convention, but I do not think that any one has been found to say that His Majesty's Government were not perfectly justified in endeavouring to dispose of outstanding difficulties with Russia by an agreement of some kind. I hope that this practical unanimity may be taken as reflecting the judgment of the country.

It seems to me that the time has undoubtedly come when agreements of this kind are really inevitable, not so much because our policy has changed but because the circumstances of the case have altered. The stronger Powers, partly owing to aggressive tendencies, partly in order to safeguard themselves against remote attack, have advanced, I will not say their frontiers, but the limits of their spheres of activity, until there is very little of the surface of the globe which is not overshadowed by the proximity of some great Power. Their outposts are within sight of each other, and an act of indiscretion on the part of a local agent, a blunder, or a piece of impetuosity on the part of a soldier, may give rise to a conflagration in which the whole civilised world may be involved.

Nor is it less true that the attitude of the weaker communities has changed in recent years; they are better organised, better supplied with information, and, as my noble friend on the cross benches said the other evening, more liable than they were to the impressions of those waves of restlessness that from time to time pass over an Oriental community. It follows that they are better able than they used to be to take advantage of the rivalries of their more powerful neighbours. I do not know anything more unedifying than the competition of two Great Powers for the favour of a weaker Power. Their methods, whether they resort to cajolery, or intimidation, or bribery, are none of them of a very satisfactory or dignified description, and all of them have a feature in common, that they render it easy for the weaker Power which is the object of these attentions, to play a part which has for weak or corrupt Governments a special fascination, the part of *tertius gaudens*.

I believe, therefore, that the people of this country are ready to welcome any International Agreements which will have the effect on the one hand, of diminishing the prospect of international conflict, and, on the other hand, of relieving their Government from the somewhat sordid and expensive rivalry of which I have just spoken. Most of us will, therefore, be found, for a fairly good Agreement of this kind, willing to pay a liberal price and to make sacrifices on points of secondary importance, and most of us will be ready to regard an arrangement of this kind as a whole and not merely in respect of its effect upon those particular regions in which the contracting Powers are brought into immediate contact.

I pass now to that part of the Convention which has reference to Persia, and let me say that in no part of the world has the rivalry to which I have referred taken a more unedifying form than it has in Persia. The representative of the Foreign Office told us the other evening that he had reason to know that the predecessors of the present Government had for many years past been in favour of some general arrangement with Russia of the kind embodied in this Convention. I believe that is perfectly true, but he must be aware that in those days, although we were willing, the Government of Russia apparently were by no means prepared to come to terms with us. At any rate, I will venture to say this, that this particular arrangement in regard to its different elements is entirely new, and so far as I am aware, entirely unlike any previous proposition entertained by the late Government.

So far as Persia is concerned, this Agreement is based on the division of Persia into three spheres. Now, I do not think anyone will have the courage to say, not even my noble friend had the courage to say, that these spheres are described in a manner favourable to this country. He based his argument rather upon the statement that the spheres were described in a manner corresponding to the existing facts. Now, what are the existing facts? Stated in the broadest way are they not these? Russia has a strong and acknowledged predominance in Northern Persia. My noble friend told the House that in his belief the late Government would have allowed Northern Persia to be within the Russian sphere. That may be true, although we may have something to say as to what is and what is not Northern Persia. Then with regard to Southern Persia, is it not the case that just as Russian influence has been predominant in the north, so has British influence been predominant in the south? The figures given by my noble friend last week, and which I will not recapitulate, established that completely.

Now, does the sphere division as we see it in this Convention at all correspond with the existing facts as I have described them? We have, in the first place, a Russian sphere, which includes a great deal more than Northern Persia, which includes provinces which by no stretching of language can be described as "adjoining or in the neighbourhood of" the Russian frontier. I do not think that can be seriously asserted, and this sphere includes nearly the whole of the principal Persian cities and nearly all the great trade routes. Then we come to the British sphere. Now, I am not going to deny for a moment the strategical value of the British sphere; but from other points of view it compares very unfavourably with the sphere allotted to Russia. But between the two is the neutral sphere in which each of the two Powers is to have a free hand, and in theory no doubt that is an arrangement fair to both parties; but how is it likely to work? Is it not more than probable that Russia, based on her strong position in the northern sphere, holding as she will all the great lines of communication from the north, and the whole of the important cities which are the termini of the trade routes—is it not humanly certain that she will compete with us in the neutral sphere upon terms extremely advantageous to her and extremely disadvantageous to us?

It is quite true that, under this Convention, existing British concessions wherever they are found will be safeguarded. My noble friend on the cross benches has dwelt upon that and has suggested that the stipulation should be sufficient to protect the various important British enterprises which are to be found in different parts of Persia; but although it is quite true that, according to the letter of the Convention we are given a kind of most-favoured-nation treatment, both in the neutral and the Russian sphere, is it not the case that experience has shown that where all the natural advantages are in the hands of another Power, such most-favoured-nation treatment is really of very little value. I hope I may be wrong, but I shall be agreeably disappointed if we do not find that before we are very much older the virtual boundaries of the Russian sphere will extend to the limits of the British sphere, and that the neutral sphere will prove of very little avail to us. Because we must remember that when we are talking of concessions in this matter, we are dealing, not only with commercial concessions, but with concessions of a political character, and we all know the deadly effect with which these hybrid concessions, partly of a commercial and partly of a political character, whether they are for banks, railways, or lines of telegraph—we all know the deadly effect with which they can be used by a Power which is strong on the spot, and which has behind it financial resources greater than our own, which it is able to use, as the noble Viscount behind me pointed out, with a freedom which is not accorded to us under our system of Parliamentary government.

Now just a word in reference to the Persian Gulf. I am sure we listened with satisfaction to my noble friend's announcement that His Majesty's Government stand in regard to this question exactly where we stood before them. I hail that admission with delight. It will proclaim to all concerned that the policy of the late Government in this respect did not represent a passing mood, but was based on the deliberate judgment and opinion of the people of this country. But is my noble friend quite right in thinking that we can wish for no more than the kind of reference to the Persian Gulf which is found in Sir Edward Grey's despatch, with which this correspondence opens? I am anxious to make it clear to your Lordships that my expectations in this matter are not of an exaggerated description. I do not think it would have been possible to insert in this Convention anything like a detailed agreement with the Russian Government in regard to matters connected with the Persian Gulf. It would for example, have been impossible for the two Powers to take upon themselves to deal with the rights of other Powers in the Persian Gulf, but I cannot see why it was impossible for Russia by some distinct acknowledgment to make her own position towards us perfectly clear to all concerned.

Surely, in these cases what usually happens is that notes are exchanged between the representatives of the two Powers. In this case we have no document emanating from the Russian Government. We merely have an announcement that our view of the Gulf question has been clearly represented to and noted by the Russian Government, and an intimation that His Majesty's Government have reason to believe that this question will not give rise to difficulties between the two Governments should developments arise. I am grateful for small mercies. I would much sooner have this than have nothing at all; but, if I am told that it represents the high-water mark of our reasonable expectations, then I respectfully take leave to express my doubt. It seems to me that we are particularly justified in entertaining that feeling, because the whole essence of this Convention is that we are endeavouring to substitute for the *obiter dicta* of Ministers—for vague assurances given from time to time and sometimes qualified or withdrawn afterwards—a distinct and permanent record of policy of the Governments concerned.

Then, my Lords, as to Afghanistan. Here let me say unreservedly that I welcome heartily the three-fold announcement which the Afghan part of the Convention contains. We have a distinct statement that Afghanistan is admitted by Russia to be outside the sphere of Russian influence, that the political relations of the country are to be conducted through the British Government, and that no Russian agents are to be sent into Afghanistan. To have obtained those admissions is an achievement on which I am ready to congratulate His Majesty's Government. I know it may be said that we have had these principles admitted before by Russian Ministers; that is undoubtedly the case, but those who have followed the history of this question must be aware that we have been constantly told that these various assurances were given with reference to the circumstances of the moment, and that as the circumstances have changed, so the obligatory character and the scope of these assurances must change also. That kind of qualification will be impossible now that we have a contract recorded in a formal document founded upon reciprocal concessions and reciprocal obligations.

My noble friend Lord Midleton called attention to the wording of Article I, which certainly seems to me to require explanation, because, if the second paragraph is taken literally, it does appear to preclude us from allowing the Ameer of Afghanistan to take any measures for the defence of his own country. I feel quite sure that that is not the intention of the clause, and that what is intended is that we should do all in our power to discourage the Afghan Government from organising unprovoked attack upon the Russian frontier. But the ambiguity of the clause as it reads in the English version is much increased by an extraordinary omission in the translation to which I should like to call the attention of the noble Lord opposite. If he will compare the second paragraph of Article I. in the English version—

> "His Britannic Majesty's Government further engage to exercise their influence in Afghanistan only in a pacific sense, and they will not themselves take, nor encourage Afghanistan to take, any measures threatening Russia—"

with the same paragraph in the French version—

> "Le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique s'engage, en outre, à exercer son influence en Afghanistan seulement dans un sens pacifique, et il ne prendra pas lui-même en Afghanistan et n'encouragera pas l'Afghanistan à prendre des mesures menacant la Russie—"

he will find that whereas in the English version His Majesty's Government engage themselves not to take, nor encourage Afghanistan to take, any measure threatening Russia, in the French version the British Government undertake not themselves to take "in Afghanistan," nor to encourage Afghanistan to take, any measure threatening Russia. The noble Lord will observe the great difference in the sense made by the omission of the words "in Afghanistan." I trust we shall be told why that omission has taken place, and also whether in this case the French or English text is that which is binding upon us.

I wish to say one word in regard to Article II. Article II. is somewhat singularly drawn. It recites our treaty with the Ameer of Afghanistan of the year 1905, and, having recited that treaty, it proceeds to bind us, not to the Ameer of Afghanistan, but to the Russian Government, to observe the terms of the treaty. So far as Russia is concerned that engagement seems to be of a rather superfluous character, because in Article I. we have already declared that we have no intention of changing the political *status* of Afghanistan, and, as my noble friend pointed out the other evening, these words, on the principle of the greater containing the less, preclude us from annexing or occupying, in contravention of the treaty, any portion of Afghan territory.

But what I suppose to be the real significance of this article of the treaty is, I imagine, to be found in the concluding words of the article. We engage not to annex nor to occupy Afghan territory, but only provided the Ameer fulfils the engagement already contracted by him towards His Britannic Majesty's Government under the above mentioned treaty. I interpret those words to mean that the provisions of the Afghan Treaty remain in force, and that if the Ameer of Afghanistan should fail in meeting his obligations, we are thereupon released not only from our engagement with him, but from our engagement under this Convention to Russia.

A good deal has been said with reference to Article III. of the Convention, and I admit that it deals with a very difficult and delicate point. It is one which came not infrequently under my consideration, and it always seemed to me that it was desirable to make some arrangement for enabling what may be described as petty frontier disputes to be dealt with without the delay and circumlocution involved by a reference of them either to Calcutta or St. Petersburg; but when this matter came before us we always made it clear that in our opinion, before any such arrangement could be come to, it was necessary that there should be some definition of what was and what was not a merely local dispute; that there should be some proper machinery for dealing with those disputes which were of a local character, and above all that it should be a *conditio sine qua non* in any such arrangement that it had the consent of the Ameer. My noble friend admitted the other evening that the details of this new arrangement would require some elucidation. I do not wish to press for it to-night, but I do hope that the new arrangement, if it is to operate, will be very carefully guarded.

Article IV. lays down the admirable principle that there should be equality of commerce, particularly in Afghanistan. But the principle of equality of opportunity is enforced in a very singular fashion when you come to consider the wording of the Article. The Ameer, under that Article, promises to give Russia any facilities that he gives to us, but he does not promise to give us any facilities which he gives to Russia; and, in the next place, we are made to promise Russia equal opportunity in Afghanistan, where we predominate, but Russia does not promise us any equality of opportunity in those Asiatic regions where she is predominant. A more one-sided application of a sound principle I never came across.

With regard to the Ameer's consent, I thought there was some force in my noble friend's argument that if the whole of this matter had been suspended until such time as the Ameer's consent had been obtained the period of suspense might have been indefinitely prolonged. But I cannot help hoping that the Indian Government have taken some steps, at any rate, for preparing the mind of the Ameer for a transaction of this kind. We know that the Afghan Government are not always easy to lead, and I ask myself what would be the effect upon this Convention, which we are invited to consider as a whole, if the Afghan limb were dropped out altogether, owing to the refusal of the Ameer to give his adherence.

In regard to Tibet we are told that His Majesty's Government have followed in the steps which the late Government laid down for them. Now one word as to those steps. The Tibetan policy of the late Government was perfectly consistent; and it has again and again been clearly defined in the Blue-books. It is based on four principles. The first was that we had no desire ourselves to intrude into Tibet. In the second place, that we had no intention of allowing any one else to intrude into that country. The third principle was that we desired reasonable facilities for our trans-frontier trade, and the fulfilment of the pledges given to us by the Tibetans in 1890. The last principle upon which our policy was founded was this—that owing to our geographical position, and our comparative proximity to Tibet we insisted on maintaining a distinct predominance over the external relations of the Tibetans. To those four propositions we adhered, and we adhered to them, in spite of great provocation, when we were driven by the outrageous conduct of the Tibetans to send an expedition into their country. We demanded reparation for those outrages. When our frontier was violated, we insisted upon a proper settlement of the frontier question. When the pledges given as to the admission of our trade were broken we insisted upon extended trade facilities. When we were ignored and flouted by the Tibetan Government we insisted upon a clause giving us a predominant voice in regard to all that concern the external relations of Tibet. But we never asked for Tibetan territory. We never asked to send agents to Lhasa, nor did we ever ask for the right to interfere in the internal relations of Tibet. That was our policy. This was the policy which we explained with the utmost frankness at the time to the Russian Government, and it is the policy which is embodied in the Tibetan Convention of 1904.

The question I have to ask is whether we may take it that in the view of His Majesty's Government our Agreement with Tibet of September, 1904, remains intact and unaffected by the new Convention with the Russian Government? I hope the answer to that will be in the affirmative. I should, however, like to call attention to one point in which it seems to me that the Anglo-Russian Convention takes away something from the Convention with Tibet. By Article IX. of the Tibetan Agreement, the Government of Tibet engages that without the previous consent of the British Government no concession for railways, roads, telegraphs, mining or other rights, shall be granted to any foreign Power or the subject of any foreign Power. In the same way no Tibetan revenues, whether in kind or in cash, are to be pledged or assigned to any foreign Power or the subject of any foreign Power. This clause puts a distinct embargo upon Tibetan concessions. It is an embargo which can be raised only by the consent of this country. It is an arrangement which leaves us in a position in which we can raise the embargo or keep it on exactly as we please. Now, if your Lordships will turn to Article IV. of the Anglo-Russian Convention you will find this:—

> "The two high contracting parties engage neither to seek nor to obtain for themselves or their subjects any concession for railways, roads telegraphs, or mines or other rights in Tibet."

And in the following article a similar contract is entered into by the two Governments in regard to pledging or assigning any of the Tibetan revenues. I own that at first sight it does seem to me that these two articles imply an absolute prohibition so far as Great Britain and Russia are concerned, a prohibition which *prima facie* might be held to deprive us of the power of raising the embargo whenever it might suit us to do so, and which *pro tanto* takes away from this country that position as the tutelary Power upon which we have insisted throughout those negotiations, which is so distinctly recognised in the Tibetan Agreement, and which forms a part of the *status quo* which, according to the preamble, it is desired to maintain.

I will ask only one other question in regard to Tibet. I see it is stated that orders have been issued for the withdrawal of the British force from the Chumbi Valley. Your Lordships will remember that the British force was to remain in the Chumbi Valley until two things had happened. First, the new trade marts were to be effectively opened for three years; and, secondly, the Tibetan authorities were to comply faithfully with the terms of the Convention of 1904. I shall be glad to have it from His Majesty's Government if it is true that the troops have been ordered to withdraw, that these two conditions have been satisfactorily fulfilled.

I trust that what I have said in regard to the details of this Convention does not go beyond the limit of reasonable criticism, and I am sure that His Majesty's Government would be the last people in the world to desire that they should escape from reasonable criticism. For myself, I fully admit that at some points this Agreement contains stipulations which I regard as of the utmost value. At other points I am bound to say that the balance seems to me to incline in a marked manner against this country. But a great deal will undoubtedly depend upon the manner in which the Convention is interpreted by the Russian Government. Upon the Russian Government and upon its agents it will depend whether those direct relations which we are now obliged to allow on the Afghan frontier are used for legitimate purposes. Upon them will depend whether the free access which has been given to the Buddhist pilgrims who desire to visit Lhasa is made a pretext for political intrigue. Upon them it will depend whether those British concessions which the Russian Government have bound themselves to maintain in Persia are denied or really receive fair play.

I venture to express my confidence that this Agreement will be loyally and honourably interpreted by the Russian Government. This Convention seems to me to mark the beginning of a new era in our relations with Russia. Let us not forget that it was Russia that sought this Agreement, for until lately we know that she kept us at arm's length. I think we are justified in regarding this as denoting a fundamental change in the Asiatic policy of Russia, and, I hope, a greatly improved disposition towards this country. We have met Russia not only in the case of this Convention, but on other occasions, fairly and straightforwardly. We have done so whether at the moment fortune was smiling or frowning upon her enterprises. Therefore I, for one, am not afraid to say that I am ready to trust Russia to observe this Agreement in a spirit of absolute loyalty. I say that although it contains provisions in regard to which I entertain some misgivings. If it is interpreted in that spirit, then I hope we may look upon it as one which will heal many old sores, which will allay dangerous rivalries, which will draw two great nations closer together, and which will make for what is after all the greatest of all British interests—the interest of international peace.

*THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Earl of CREWE): My Lords, this debate, which, I think, by common consent of the House, would be described as one of extraordinary interest, has been so far conducted entirely by experts. I am sorry to spoil the average which would have been maintained if my noble friend the Leader of the House had been able to be present this evening, but I regret to say that I heard this morning that he is laid up with what, I hope, is not a serious attack of influenza, and that he will, therefore, I am afraid, be unable to be in the House for some days. In these circumstances I must ask the indulgence of noble Lords opposite while I endeavour to reply to the various points which have been raised in the course of the debate.

But before I do so, I hope I may be allowed to take the first opportunity I have had of expressing the pleasure it gives me, both as a political opponent and as a very old personal friend, to see Lord Curzon in the House. It was almost too much to hope that the noble Lord would have been able to take part in the Irish debate on the Address, and it was, therefore, with particular pleasure that I observed the noble Lord's notice on the Paper dealing with three countries of which he has a greater first-hand knowledge, for we know he has visited two of them and has had political dealings with the third. The noble Lord presented his case, as one would expect, in a manner which was powerful, lucid, and complete, and I, for one, heard his speech with great admiration. If I were to make a criticism on it I should say that, in dealing with the extraordinary mass of detail which he handled, he sometimes seemed to lose sight of the broader aspects of the case; to use a common expression, he sometimes did not quite see the wood for the trees. That was an aspect which was brought out in the speech of the noble Earl who followed him—Lord Cromer—who, with other noble Lords, reminded us that it is important to regard this Agreement as a whole. At the same time, of course, the noble Lord, and any other noble Lord, is fully entitled to draw attention to any detail which seems to him unsatisfactory.

Looking at the matter in its broad aspect, what is the effect on our relations with Russia? I most cordially re-echo everything that fell from the noble Marquess, Lord Lansdowne, on that subject. The noble Marquess knows as well as anybody in the House that for ten years past our relations with Russia have been, generally speaking, of a somewhat uncomfortable character, and more than once even threatening. We are glad to know that the carrying out of this Agreement showed, as the noble Marquess has said, a friendly disposition on the part of Russia, and since its conclusion I think it can be said without the slightest hesitation that our relations with that Power are of an infinitely more pleasant character than they were before. The Convention has also been carried through without causing complications in any other part of the world. The noble Lord, Lord Curzon, asked what the opinion of Persia might be supposed to be. We have had no word of protest from Persia on the subject, and it may interest noble Lords to know that a very distinguished Persian statesman within the last few days expressed himself in most favourable terms of the Convention, because he believed that the financial difficulties of Persia had been very largely due to the rivalry between Russia and ourselves in that country, and, although he did not say so, I take it that he meant that the actual effect of that rivalry had been rather to exploit than to develop the resources of Persia.

I could not help thinking that Lord Curzon somewhat under-rated, in the course of his arguments, the actual position which Russia has obtained as regards influence in Persia; and the noble Viscount Lord Midleton, developed what, if I may say so, was a very ingenious argument, to the effect that what I will briefly call the loan transaction might have been carried through, giving us practically all we have at present merely on condition of the loan, and without involving us in any reciprocal obligations to Russia. That may be so, but I should like to ask the noble Viscount, if that had happened, what sort of a position should we have been in to object to Persia's making any independent arrangement with Russia not merely of the present kind, but possibly of a kind more damaging to our interests. That seems to me to answer the point raised by the noble Viscount.

Before this Convention was concluded, what was the position of Russia in relation to Persia? So far as commercial advantages were concerned, noble Lords know that the Trans-Caspian Railway brought Moscow and other great centres of industry into something like immediate relations with Persia. Then Russia, at great expense, had made three very fine roads from her frontier to Teheran and elsewhere. Russia had advanced some three millions sterling by way of loan to the Persian Government. Then, as regards the military position, the Trans-Caspian Railway, of course, consolidated that, and it was further consolidated by the extension of the Caucasian Railway to the Persian frontier. Take another fact—what is called the Cossack Guard. It is called a guard, but it consists of 1,500 Cossacks, led by Russian officers, and it is not merely posted at Teheran, but is distributed in detachments in other parts of the country. All those facts taken together mean a position of great power and influence, and therefore when Lord Curzon seemed to imply, as he appeared to do in the course of his argument, that we were almost in a position to dictate terms to Russia in this matter, he surely was travelling beyond what was justified by the facts of the case.

Then as regards the South—although, as the noble Marquess said, we may have different ideas as to what constitute the North and South of Persia—speaking generally, we have, of course, a paramount position, but, on the other hand, there has been some natural tendency, from the trade development in the North, for Russian trade to extend further South. When the noble Marquess therefore talked of the danger of the neutral zone becoming, as he said, purely Russian, one has to remind him that, after all, we are dealing with more or less accomplished facts, and that if we had attempted to include in the British sphere a part of Persia in which Russian trade was becoming predominant, even supposing that we could prevent the extension of Russian trade, which, after all, by no means followed, we should then have been making an arbitrary and artificial agreement of a kind almost sure to lead to complication and difficulty in the future. To continue as regards the South. Our position in the South is, no doubt, paramount, but it would not now be true to say that Russia has no influence there. Russia, as the noble Lord knows, subsidises a line of steamers to the Gulf, which certainly was not the case when he was travelling in those parts of the world. She has also established Consuls-General at Bushire as well as at Ispahan, and Consuls at Bandar Abbas and various other places in the South.

When we come to this question of the delimitation of spheres, I am inclined to ask my noble friend whether he remembers what the opinion of the Indian Government was on this matter during the time that he was Viceroy. At that time some arrangement of this kind was contemplated as possible, and the Indian Government intimated their opinion of what the sphere was over which Russia exercised a political and commercial influence. That sphere was not the same as this, but in some respects it was a considerably less advantageous one for us than that embodied in the present Agreement. It did not include Ispahan, but it did include the British trade route which the noble Lord mentioned from Khanikin to Teheran.

LORD CURZON OF KEDLESTON: Is the noble Lord alluding to some Despatch of the Government of India in my day, or to an expression of opinion?

*THE EARL OF CREWE: I am alluding to an expression of opinion of the Indian Government.

LORD CURZON OF KEDLESTON: What form did it take?

*THE EARL OF CREWE: I am afraid I must ask the noble Lord to give notice of that Question.

LORD CURZON OF KEDLESTON: Surely, my Lords, it is hardly fair that the noble Earl, by way of making a point apparently against me, should quote from some expression of opinion which he cannot describe, of the origin of which he is uncertain, and as to which he is not quite certain whether it can properly be attributed to me, but which is alleged to have emanated from the Indian Government during the time of my Viceroyalty.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: The expression of opinion emanated from the Indian Government. How far the noble Lord, as Viceroy, was responsible for it I am not in a position to say. But I assume that in respect of this, as of all despatches which emanated from the Indian Government during his time, he would take responsibility. The point I make is this. The noble Lord criticises, as he has a perfect right to do, the line drawn by our Convention. We are prepared to show that the Indian Government at that time favoured, or, at any rate, admitted as a possible line of delimitation, a different line, and one which in some respects was more unfavourable to our interests than that which is now embodied in the Convention. If the noble Lord desires to have that expression of opinion laid on the Table, we shall find no difficulty in doing so.

I will proceed to say what that line did. It included Yezd, over which the noble Lord shed a tear, and it passed through Kerman to a point just north of Seistan. Therefore not only was that sphere larger than that which Russia has now obtained, but it also included a considerable area of the Afghan frontier which is now in its entirety either within the British or the neutral sphere. Of course, the noble Lord is quite entitled to say that that proposition on the part of the Indian Government, if it were a proposition, was made upon the understanding that the whole of the rest of Persia would fall under our influence, and that therefore this particular line ought not properly to be compared with the line which we have suggested, or, rather, carried into effect, in the Convention, because he would under no circumstances have admitted the principle of a neutral zone, and if his line had been taken we should have obtained a very much larger portion of Persia under our influence than that which we obtain under the existing Agreement. That may be so, but, at the same time we think that the advantage of obtaining, as we have obtained, either a neutrality or an influence along the Afghan frontier very much outweighs considerations of that kind.

But we do not admit that the neutral zone is in itself a disadvantage. There is a tendency sometimes to talk as though this were a partition of Persia. Everyone knows it is not, but language is sometimes used in argument as to the effect upon our commercial position there, as though the partition of Persia were taking place, with the possible results of a partition in the power of injuring trade. As my noble friend Lord Reay pointed out, and as the noble Lord opposite knows perfectly well, our commercial position in Persia does not in substance depend upon this Convention at all, but upon our commercial treaties with that country; and we believe it will be a distinct advantage to have this neutral zone between the two spheres of influence in which the rivalry will be of a purely commercial, and not at all of a political character. The noble Marquess admitted that strategically we had obtained all that he could wish.

On the point of the Persian Gulf, the noble Marquess who has just sat down went so far as to admit that there were very strong reasons for not including any mention of the Persian Gulf in the Convention itself. But the noble Marquess asked whether it might not have been possible to have obtained some definite and authentic declaration from the Russian Government on the subject. As a matter of fact, the Russian Foreign Minister did hand to our Ambassador at St. Petersburg a document explaining that the Russian Government did not deny our especial interests in the Persian Gulf, and a special note of the receipt of that document was taken in the reply to the Russian Foreign Minister. I do not know whether that meets the question of the noble Marquess. Our position in the Persian Gulf is very much that of Russia in the northern parts of the frontier of Persia—it is reserved and regulated by the logic of facts; and whether any further advantage could be obtained by a more formal recognition of that by the Russian Government seems to me to be open to great doubt, having obtained, as we have, the document which I have described.

As regards Afghanistan, I repeat that the advantage to us of having the frontier of that country within the British or neutral sphere is of the greatest possible value. That fact was recognised long ago by Lord Salisbury, who realised what the dangers might be, if the British and Russian frontiers were coterminous on the borders of Afghanistan, in having to deal with any isolated incident of the kind mentioned by the noble Marquess, arising, perhaps, from the imprudence, or even the bad faith, of some subordinate on the spot. It was because of the non-existence of such a barrier that the Penjdeh incident occurred. I confess, therefore, I do not see how Lord Curzon was able to argue that there was a positive additional danger arising from the arrangements devised under this Agreement. Then the noble Lord went on to say that, after all, this was only the twelfth assurance we had received in relation to Afghanistan, and he could not see that it had much more value than former assurances. That statement has been answered more than once during the debate from both sides of the House. There surely is a very distinct difference between the mere expression of an intention given, as has been said, only while the same condition of things lasted, and a formal instrument drawn up between the Sovereigns and the Governments of Great Britain and Russia.

As the noble Lord knows, difficulties have actually arisen, after several of these declarations have been made, between the Russian Government and ourselves as to the proper interpretation which ought to be put upon those declarations. There was a time, unless I am mistaken, when the Russian Government were not willing to admit that political agents ought to be altogether excluded from Afghanistan. Anything of that kind is now rendered absolutely impossible by the direct veto which is put upon any such interference in the Agreement. Of course, it is open to the noble Lord, or to anyone else, to say that commercial agents may act politically, but how that, under any circumstances, is to be prevented without building a complete wall round the country and denying admission to anybody, it is difficult to see.

Then the noble Marquess asked me one or two questions about the Articles of Agreement with reference to Afghanistan. As regards Article I, the French version, of course, is the one which has to be taken as binding, and if there is any real discrepancy in the English translation the correction will, of course, be made. But I confess I do not see that the sense is otherwise than perfectly clear, as it is obvious that in an Agreement referring to Afghanistan it could only be in Afghanistan that the interference could possibly occur. As to Article II, I take it to be perfectly clear that if the Ameer fails to keep his obligations we are released from ours, and, *ipso facto*, released from them in relation to Russia in the same way as we are in relation to the Ameer himself. The noble Marquess did not ask me to give him an answer to his question relating to Article III, but the point he raises shall certainly be borne in mind. As regards Article IV, there is no doubt an apparent inequality, but I understand that when the Agreement was being discussed it was not thought worth while to press this point, on the ground that our position in relation to Afghanistan was such that concessions of a kind damaging to us were most unlikely to be given to Russian traders without at any rate our agreement.

Then with regard to Tibet, we are asked how we came to introduce Tibet into this Agreement at all—a country which is so far from Russia and so near to India. That question, I think, has really been answered by Lord Lansdowne. We have only carried out the noble Marquess's policy as explained in the conversation he had with the Russian Ambassador in 1904, and I do not think we have departed from that in any material point. The fact of the Chinese suzerainty over Tibet has never been seriously contested by anybody, and I thought the noble Marquess put it somewhat strongly when he spoke of our influence there as being almost of the nature of another suzerainty. It is perfectly true that our interests in Tibet or in the integrity of Tibet, were of a very special kind, but we have not yet attained, neither have we ever attempted to claim, any joint suzerainty with China over that country. As to the integrity of Tibet, I take it there is no difference of opinion. Mr. Balfour stated in another place that the less we or Russia had to do with Tibet the better, and that, I suppose, is the common opinion of statesmen in this country. But the fact that Russia has been brought into the matter at all was due, as appears from the conversation which the noble Marquess opposite had with Count Benckendorff, to its being part of a larger arrangement affecting our relations with Russia, not only in Asia, but in other parts of the world. That being so, if there was no objection in itself to bringing Tibet into the Agreement with Russia, it was a very good reason for doing so, and I think that, if the Agreement had been carried out by the noble Marquess, the same thing would have occurred.

As regards the pilgrims, Lord Reay explained very clearly that, as a matter of fact, it would be impossible to stop the pilgrimages from the Russian side, and, that being so, it would be futile to attempt to do so by way of agreement. What has happened is that the pilgrimages are placed on a firm footing, and it becomes a duty on the part of Russia to see that they are pilgrimages and not anything else. The noble Marquess opposite has taken some exception to Article IV. I understood the noble Marquess's argument to be that we had agreed with Tibet that no other Power should obtain concessions or in any way interfere in Tibetan matters, and that by joining Russia in a similar declaration we had deprived ourselves of the power of departing from that declaration if we found it necessary to do so. But if, as I believe, the declaration was taken to apply to ourselves just as much as to other countries, I do not see how that point arises. We did not, as I understand, reserve to ourselves the power of entering Tibet to the exclusion of everyone else, and if we exclude ourselves, the mere fact that we agree with Russia to exclude ourselves and Russia does not seem to me to alter the position in the slightest degree. I may say, in reply to the noble Marquess, that it is perfectly true that the Chumbi Valley has been evacuated. It has been evacuated because the conditions for its evacuation have been complied with.

I have made what I fear is a very imperfect attempt to deal with the various points raised in the course of this debate. We believe that this Agreement will stand, as fully as can be expected of any such Agreement, and particularly of one of such a far-reaching kind, detailed examination without its being found possible to pick too many holes in it. We also believe that the Russian Government will loyally carry out its provisions so far as they affect her. We think, therefore, that, considered in its broader aspect, this Agreement will not only tend to the most desirable result of closer amity with Russia, but also achieve what, after all, is the main object of all our diplomacy—the assurance of the peace of Europe, and thereby of the whole civilised world.

LORD CURZON OF KEDLESTON: My Lords, I must thank the noble Lord for the kindly terms on which he welcomed me to your Lordships' House. I cannot promise him an early intrusion into Irish discussions, although even that is a frontier which I may some day cross. At any rate the noble Lord has provided me with ample material for a short reply in regard to the three countries about which we have been speaking. My Motion in the form in which it was drawn up contained a request for Papers; but understanding from the noble Lord who represents the Foreign Office that His Majesty's Government did not think it desirable to lay any Papers upon this matter, I desisted from that portion of my Motion.

Noble Lords opposite have replied to that act of abstention on my part in a somewhat peculiar and, I venture to think, although I speak without any great experience of this House, in a somewhat irregular manner. Lord Fitzmaurice in the debate the other day quoted at some length from a Paper which appeared to be a Report of a private Committee that sat in the India Office or the Foreign Office during the time I was in India. I do not recollect that Report; nor do I remember the opinion, if any, which I was called upon to give upon it. But the noble Lord quoted it apparently to put me in a difficult position. I submit that the noble Lord ought not to have adopted that course unless the Paper was already on the Table.

Lord FITZMAURICE: I had no wish to put the noble Lord in a difficult position. I only wanted to show that the two lines were practically identical.

Lord CURZON of KEDLESTON: The noble Earl has gone even further, because he referred to Papers about the identity of which he was uncertain, and he certainly did quote them in order to put me in a difficult position. His object was to show that while I was in India the Government of India had apparently written a despatch in which they had either proposed or agreed to a line of demarcation between the Russian and British spheres in Persia.

***The Earl of CREWE**: I had no desire to put the noble Lord in a difficult position. My intention was simply one of self-defence.

Lord CURZON of KEDLESTON: I do not know that the noble Lord has been attacked; therefore there was no necessity for his defending himself.

***The Earl of CREWE**: The Government have been attacked.

Lord CURZON of KEDLESTON: The noble Earl's object was to show that while I was in India apparently I recommended a line of demarcation between British and Russian spheres of influence in Persia which disabled me from the position which I took up the other day. I deny that *in toto*. The noble Earl asked me whether I would accept responsibility for the despatches of the Government of India about Persia. I do, because to the best of my recollection I wrote every one of them myself. I should be very glad indeed if the particular despatch to which the noble Earl alludes, or, indeed, the whole of the despatches which I wrote about Persia while I was in India were laid upon the Table of your Lordships' House. They would show the steady efforts of the Government of India for the affirmation and consolidation of British interests in Persia. As regards the interpretation to be put upon this particular despatch my recollection does not in the least bear out what the noble Earl has said; and I believe that if the despatch were laid upon the Table he would find that a very different impression would be produced.

This debate has produced a number of very interesting and important speeches, but I think I am carrying with me the majority of those who were present on Thursday when I say it has not produced anything in the nature of a reply to the detailed criticism that was passed upon the contents of this treaty. Whenever we have got to close quarters with His Majesty's Government they have taken shelter under the formula that we must not look at the details, but be content to examine the treaty as a whole. They are even ready to admit that they have made a doubtful and perhaps a bad bargain in certain particulars, but they contend that a doubtful and bad bargain is better than no bargain at all. I admit the validity of that contention as far as it goes; but I submit that it is placing rather a considerable draft on our confidence, because it amounts to a claim that we, who know nothing of the negotiations, or of the degree of valour with which the British Government backed up British interests, are bound to accept whatever terms they submit to this country on the simple assurance from them that the result will be more harmonious relations between some other Great Power and ourselves.

It is obvious how immense and dangerous an extension might be given to this plea. We might have some future Government concluding a treaty with France in which they gave up, for instance, the Channel Islands, and they might come here and say: "You must not look at the details, the sum total is that we shall have more harmonious and friendly relations than before." I remember that much the same argument was applied to the cession of Heligoland to Germany, and I cannot say that is an experiment that has been altogether justified in the state of feeling it has produced. Therefore, I do not feel at all inclined to absolve the Government from the duty of answering the criticisms of this treaty point by point.

The fact that so little has been said with regard to the individual clauses of the treaty leads me to think that the task of defence has been found one of great difficulty. May I briefly allude to those points of the criticism directed against the Government which, as it appears to me, have met with no reply at all, or with an unsatisfactory reply? Lord Fitzmaurice spent a good deal of time the other day in answering a speech which I did not make. He had evidently studied the views of Professor Vambéry in advance, and imagined that I had used some of his arguments. I am not Professor Vambéry, and I was unfamiliar with his views. That considerable authority, when the fact of the treaty was announced in the newspapers, did most heartily welcome it, but as soon as he saw the terms of the treaty he retracted his approbation and denounced it in rather violent terms.

As regards Persia, one of the points that have been made most strongly from these Benches is that the Russian sphere has been drawn with an elasticity and exaggeration that find no justification in the arguments advanced by the Government; and that it is likely to be inimical to British commercial interests in the future. To that no reply has been vouchsafed except on one point. Lord Fitzmaurice has told us that the trade route from Baghdad, by way of Khanikin, to Teheren, had been included in the Russian sphere because Russia put her foot down and said but for that concession she would not conclude the treaty. Well, that is a very suggestive admission; it rather indicates the spirit in which this treaty was negotiated. One would like to know whether it ever occurred to His Majesty's Government to be in a situation in which it became them to put their foot down and say: "We must have this point conceded or there will be no treaty at all." I very much doubt if the secret records of the Foreign Office contain any mention of an incident of the kind.

The noble Lord said it was only reasonable that this trade route should be handed over to Russia, because when the Germans made their railway from Baghdad to the frontier Russia would desire to make the extension to Teheran. But is not the proposition equally valid that the extension to Banda Abbas should one day be carried forward under British influence? The noble Lord who spoke just now laid much stress on the evidences of Russian interests in the north of Persia; he spoke of roads, of concessions of various descriptions, and of Cossacks—they, by the way, were not *bona fide* Cossacks, but Persians in Cossack uniform, with a few Russian officers—but none of this evidence of Russian interest has been contested; nor has that part of the treaty handing over the northern part of Persia to Russia met with criticism; where we do feel alarmed is when we leave that sphere and come to the neutral sphere—to the south. Any argument that can be put forward in favour of Russian influence in the north can be more strongly advanced for British influence in the south.

The noble Lord seems to think that the account of the condition of things I gave your Lordships dated from the time when I was in Persia for the first time, fifteen years ago or more. I would not have presumed to have based my statement to your Lordships' House on such ancient, obsolete experience. I was in Persia not five years ago, and I say that, so far from His Majesty's Government recognising facts as they now are as they claim to have done, they have entirely ignored the position that existed at that time. In the whole of Southern Persia British influence was absolutely predominant over the sea; in the ports, on the trade routes that influence predominated, and I cannot understand what reason can be advanced for our exclusion from competition in that part of the neutral zone.

There is one point which has been made more than once, to the effect that British concessionaires will lose nothing by this treaty. Well, I should like to put that to practical test. There is a most important concession in the south of Persia held by a firm, the leading member of which is a Member of the other House, and a supporter of His Majesty's Government. I allude to Mr. Lynch. The route runs from Karum River to Kermanshah, and there is another from Arnaz to Ispahan. On these two routes the firm has spent enormous sums of money, and has been assisted by subsidies from the Home Government and the Indian Government. Under the Agreement these are in the neutral sphere, but the terminus is in the Russian sphere. I would suggest to the noble Lord that he should put the question to Mr. Lynch, one of the supporters of his Government, whether he considers the prospect of the enterprise, to which he has devoted so much money and patriotic energy, is as good now as before the Convention was concluded. I think he will say the prospect is very different.

Upon one point I was glad to hear an explanation. My noble friend and others have been somewhat disquieted at the terms in which the Russian declaration about the Persian Gulf was conveyed. We could not understand why the declaration did not appear with the name of the Russian Minister, but was only included in the form of quotations from conversations. It is gratifying to be told as we were just now by the noble Lord that fhe assurances were contained in a letter from the Russian Minister to our Foreign Secretary, and I am only surprised that His Majesty's Government did not do us the favour of letting us see the document itself. An argument has been used about the Gulf which I confess I do not understand. What has been said as to the difficulty of making any statement as to our direct interest in the Persian Gulf where other Powers may be said to have interests also has impressed me very considerably. But when the noble Lord and others went on to argue that our position in the Gulf was strengthened by exclusion of mention of the Persian Gulf I confess I could not follow him. I have friends and correspondents on the Persian Gulf, and I am sure if the noble Lord visited that part of the world he would not find a single individual in any responsible position who would say, and I very much doubt if the Government of India would say that our position is strengthened by the omission. I notice that the Russian newspaper *Novoe Vremya* welcomed the omission of any mention of the Gulf in the treaty on the ground that it might open the way to Russia for the future gratification of her ambitions in that quarter.

And now a word or two in reference to Afghanistan. No attempt of any sort has been made to answer the questions we have addressed to the Government as to the apparent failure to obtain reciprocal right from Russia in respect to trade with the khanates of Khiva and Bokhara, where we have for several years been endeavouring, without success, to obtain concessions. We might have supposed that something would have been said about Chinese Turkestan. What would have been more natural than that we should have recognition from Russia of the rights of our Consul at Kashgar when we were making concessions to Russia; that when we were entering into self-denying ordinances in regard to Tibet we should ask for similar self-denying ordinances from Russia? There were some other points in regard to Afghanistan, but I will not trouble the House with them now.

In regard to Tibet, there has been no attempt whatever to justify the remarkable Article by which we take Russia into consultation about our evacuation of the Chumbi Valley, and the fulfilment or the reverse by the Tibetans of their undertakings with with us. The argument of the noble Earl practically amounts to this: "We have really been carrying out in all loyalty the policy of our predecessors, and it is not for you to object, because we have done nothing more than you would have done yourselves." But can you seriously take that line? I have a series of quotations from conversations between my noble friend and the Russian Ambassador giving more than once the views and intentions of His Majesty's Government, and it is perfectly clear that he did no more than repeat the declaration of intentions made in both Houses. He also more than once repeated the claim that in consequence of our geographical position Great Britain would continue to occupy a tutelary position towards Tibet. That was the claim upon which the action of the late Government and the expedition were based. But has any predominance in Tibet been left to Great Britain by this Convention? The whole point of this part of the Agreement is that Russia is taken into partnership with equal ights to our own. When the noble Earl contends that the late Government, had it remained in office, would have carried out this Agreement, he does an injustice to the late Government which its members have every reason to resent.

The most serious part of this Tibet policy is that disclosed in the speech of the noble Lord when he defined the present policy of His Majesty's Government as a "minimising" policy. That is a diplomatic euphemism for throwing away all the advantages that were gained by the trouble and expenditure of the expedition. I remember in old days that the late Mr. Gladstone once described a retreat of British troops as a strategical movement to the rear, and in this case this minimising policy means that, after having undertaken this great outlay and having been successful, we have replaced China, or rather we have placed her in Tibet in a position she never before enjoyed, and we have left Tibet, with whom we had every prospect of opening friendly relations, to lapse into the condition of monkish superstition and churlish isolation she occupied for so long.

There is one argument on which great stress has been laid outside the House, by the omission of which here I have been much struck, and that is the security of India. There is not one of us who would not hope that the security of our Indian Empire — immeasurably sacred and strategically important as it is—had been fortified and secured by an agreement with Russia. If we could think that, many of us would throw away the doubts with which we have regarded particular parts of this Agreement. But the fact that the Government have made no allusion to that possible result leads me to think that it is one on which they are not inclined to lay overmuch stress themselves. However that may be, I hope that nothing has occurred under this Convention which will induce His Majesty's Government to relax in the smallest degree the efforts to which we are bound for the defence of Indian territory. I hope there will be no reduction of military forces in that country, no reduction by a single rupee in the expenditure to which we are committed for its defence. If favourable results are to ensue from this Convention, I hope that they may be found over the whole sphere of diplomacy.

The noble Lord laid immense stress upon the attitude of friendly and harmonious co-operation which was springing up between Russia and ourselves in consequence of this Agreement in all parts of the world. If that be true, then that attitude between the two Powers ought to be directed to the solution of many questions hitherto at issue between us. Only the day before this debate was opened, I happened to be reading a report of proceedings in another place and I came across this Question and Answer—

"Mr. Pike Pease asked the Secretary for Foreign Affairs if there were any outstanding cases with regard to compensation for damage or loss incurred by British ships during the Russo-Japanese war. Mr. Runciman, on behalf of the Foreign Minister, replied: 'My right hon. friend regrets to state that most of these cases are still outstanding. Though His Majesty's Government have repeatedly called attention to the case of the "Knight Commander," and pressed for a reply to their proposal that the matter should be referred to aribtration, no answer has, down to the present time, been received from the Russian Government. His Majesty's Government are also awaiting replies to communications they have addressed to the Imperial Government in regard to the case of the "Calchas," and the claims arising in connection with the detention of the Peninsular and Oriental steamer "Malacca" in the Red Sea. The cases of the "Hipsang," "St. Kilda," "Ikhona," and

"'Oldhamia" are still pending, in various stages, before the Russian Prize Courts.'"

It is apparently a very long time that these claims have been outstanding. I venture to say that it would be a most satisfactory test of the relations which His Majesty's Government claim to have set up between the Russian Government and themselves, and a most happy omen for the future, which we all without distinction of party would welcome, if we could have some evidence of the existence of that harmony and co-operation which is the real and sole basis of the treaty concluded by His Majesty's Government.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord LOREBURN): Does the noble Lord press his Motion?

LORD CURZON OF KEDLESTON: No, I withdraw it.

Motion (by leave of the House) withdrawn.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Eight o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 10th February, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

KING'S SPEECH (ANSWER TO ADDRESS).

The Comptroller of the Household reported His Majesty's Answer to the Address, as followeth:—

"I have received with great satisfaction the loyal and dutiful expression of your thanks for the Speech with which I have opened the present Session of Parliament."

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order 62 has been complied with, viz.:—Great Eastern Railway (General Powers) Bill; South-West Suburban Water Bill; Garw and Ogmore Gas Bill; Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS].

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in respect of the Bills comprised in the List reported by the Chairman of Ways and Means as intended to originate in the House of Lords, they have certified that the Standing Orders have been complied with in the following cases, viz:—Metropolitan Electric Tramways; Interoceanic Railway of Mexico.

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petitions for the following Bills, originating in the Lords, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz.:—Metropolitan Electric Tramways [Lords]; Interoceanic Railway of Mexico [Lords].

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz.:—Ards and Bangor Railways Bill.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

PRIVATE BILLS (PETITION FOR ADDITIONAL PROVISION) (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for additional Provision in the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz:—Margate Corporation Bill.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

Burnley Corporation Bill; Bury and District Joint Water Board Bill; City of Glasgow Bill; Conway and Colwyn Bay Joint Water Board Bill; Criccieth Water and Improvement Bill; Doncaster Corporation Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Glyncorrwg Urban District Council Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Harwich Docks Bill; Hastings Harbour Bill; Leeds Corporation Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Lincoln Corporation Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Padiham Urban District Council Bill; Rochdale Corporation Bill; Slough Urban District Water Bill. Read a second time and committed.

Stockport Corporation Bill. To be read a second time To-morrow.

Thames Conservancy Bill; West Bridgford Urban District Water Council Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

West Riding County Council Bill. Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. SPEAKER called the attention of the House to the provisions of the Bill, which were of too important a character to be dealt with by a Private Bill.

Whereupon the Order was discharged, and the Bill withdrawn.

PETITIONS.

LICENSED PREMISES (EXCLUSION) OF CHILDREN).

Petitions for legislation: From Birkenshaw; Birmingham; Hose; Leeds; Truro; Spen Valley; West Birmingham; and Wolstanton; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY.

Petitions for legislation: From Awsworth; Birmingham; Brighton; Burslem; and Stanford le Hope; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

JUDICIAL STATISTICS (ENGLAND AND WALES).

Copy presented, of Judicial Statistics Part I., relating to Criminal Proceedings, Police, Coroners, Prisons, Reformatory and Industrial Schools, and Criminal Lunatics for England and Wales for 1906 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CHILDREN BILL.

Copy presented, of Tables of Comparison between the Provisions of the Bill and existing Enactments [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

NAVY (DISCIPLINE).

Copy presented, of Rules and Regulations, dated 18th January, 1908, amending Regulations for Naval Prisons, made by the Admiralty under Section 81 of the Naval Discipline Act [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SHETLAND MAIL SERVICE.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 7th February; *Mr. Runciman*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 41.]

LAND REGISTRY (NEW BUILDINGS) ACT, 1900.

Account presented, showing the Money issued from the Consolidated Fund, under the provisions of The Land Registry (New Buildings) Act, 1900, and of the Expenditure; the Money expended and borrowed and the Securities created under the said Act, for the period ended 31st March, 1907, together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 42.]

PUBLIC OFFICES (ACQUISITION OF SITE) ACT, 1895, &c.

Account presented, showing the Monies issued out of the Consolidated Fund, the Monies borrowed and the Securities created in respect thereof, the disposal of Monies issued to the National Debt Commissioners for temporary investment, and the Expenditure, under the provisions of the Acts, to the 31st March, 1907; together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 43.]

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1887.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 6th February, 1908, granting a Retired Allowance to Mr. George MacEvey, Civil Assistant, Ordnance Survey, Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, under the Act [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3956 and 3957 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Augmentation of Benefices. Copy of Return of Proceedings under The Augmentation of Benefices Act, 1863, up to and inclusive of the 7th February, 1908 [by Act].

COMPENSATION ON NON-RENEWAL OF LICENCES.

Address for "Return showing in respect of each of the Licences for which compensation was awarded at the supplemental meetings of the quarter sessions for the county of London, held on the 27th and 28th days of January, 1908, the total amount awarded, and the share thereof assigned to the Licence holder, and the values at which the licensed premises were in 1907 assessed for Schedule A of the Income-Tax and for local rates. —(*Sir Thomas Whittaker.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS. CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Licensing Statistics.

MR. CHARLES ROBERTS (Lincoln): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can explain the fact that the figures of on-licences issued for the years 1903–1904 and 1904–1905. as given in the Annual Reports of the Inland Revenue Department, show a total diminution of 1,727 on-licences, from 102,757 to 101,030, while 361 new on-licences were in fact granted in those two years, whereas the Home Office Blue-book, Licensing Statistics, 1906, page 1, shows only a net diminution of 1,288 on-licences in those two years; whether the Parliamentary Returns of licences refused, 194 of 1903 and 230 of 1904, and this Home Office Blue-book, have ignored some hundreds of licences given up in those two years in Birmingham and elsewhere under surrender schemes, which were not technically licences refused by the justices; and whether, therefore, the total gross diminution of all on-licences got rid of on all grounds, allowing for the grant of new on-licences, was 2,088 in the two years preceding the passing of the Licensing Act, 1904.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The figure 102,757 appears to refer to the year 1902–1903, not 1903–1904. Subject to that correction the explanation of the difference between the various figures quoted is as follows. The figures given in the volumes of licensing statistics represent premises in existence on a given date and in possession of justices' licences authorising them to take out Excise licences. The figures in the Reports of the Inland Revenue Commissioners represent the Excise licences issued during a period of twelve months. More than one Excise licence may be taken out in respect of the same premises; so that the abolition of one licensed house may involve the disappearance of more than one Excise licence, or the expiration of an Excise licence may leave the premises to which it related still in existence as licensed premises. On the other hand a holder of a justices' licence does not always proceed within a fixed time to take out an Excise licence. Facts such as these necessarily cause differences between the two sets of figures. Differences will be found both before and after the Act of 1904 came into operation. Again, as regards the statement in the Question that "361 new on-licences were in fact granted" in the two years 1903 and 1904, it is to be observed that, in the volumes of licensing statistics from which these figures appear to be taken, it is stated that they are "only approximate." Moreover, the figures represent justices' licences, and cannot be used for the purpose of subtraction or addition in connection with the figures of Excise licences, *e.g.*, so as to convert the figures 1,727 into 2,088. As regards the old Parliamentary Returns of Licences Refused, which are indicated in the Question, it would be wrong to say that they ignored licences given up under surrender schemes, seeing that they did not profess to deal with such cases or with more than was required by the terms of the Orders of the House of Commons to which they were returned, viz., the licences actually refused by justices for certain reasons. The licensing statistics have not ignored such surrenders, for without them, and without lapses of licences from other causes also, the difference between the figures shown for 1903 and for 1905 could not be obtained. The figures in the licensing statistics have been obtained by inquiry into the actual facts separately for every date and for every area for which they are given. If, therefore, any licensed premises have, in fact, ceased to exist as such by reason of refusal, surrender, or lapse, the result appears in the figures shown for successive years. Every care has been taken to make these figures represent accurately the premises in existence on a given date which afford facilities (actual or potential) for obtaining liquor for consumption on the premises. No similarly practical end appears to be served by a calculation of the "gross diminution" of licences, if that phrase means the mere number of licences which may have ceased to exist, irrespective of the new licences which may have been granted by justices and actually come into working existence.

New Rules for China and Earthenware Trade.

Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can state when the new draft special rules for the china and earthenware trade, to replace those depending on Lord James's voluntary scheme, and rendered necessary by the inclusion of lead poisoning among industrial diseases for purposes of workmen's compensation, will be issued.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I propose to appoint a Departmental Committee of Inquiry with regard to the use of lead in a number of industries, including the one mentioned in the Question, and pending the Report of that Committee I do not think it would be worth while to undertake the revision of the existing special rules. No serious difficulty has arisen from the temporary co-existence of Schedule B. of those rules with Section 8 of the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1906, and none is anticipated.

Treatment of Imprisoned Women Suffragists.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Croydon): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the case of Miss Mary Pearson, of Croydon, who was recently sentenced at the police court to six weeks imprisonment in the second class; whether he is aware that the other persons committed for the same offence were sentenced to imprisonment in the first class; whether he will state why a distinction has been made in the case of Miss Pearson; and whether he will give instructions that she may be placed in the first class for the remainder of her term of imprisonment.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I have made inquiry about this case, but I am informed by the magistrates that the other persons committed for the same offence as this lady were similarly treated. None of them were placed in the first division. A year ago a number of persons committed to prison in respect of similar disturbances were placed in the first division, but the matter is one in the discretion of the magistrates, and I understand their view is that the persistence of such offences renders it undesirable to adopt that course any longer.

Remuneration of Sub-Postmasters.

MR. GRAYSON (Yorkshire, W.R., Colne Valley): To ask the Postmaster-General, in view of the fact that over 20,000 sub-postmasters in shops receive as remuneration only £20 to £40 a year for a working day of twelve hours, without a meal hour, and that many of them are compelled out of this sum to pay for assistance if they desire to absent themselves for a single evening, whether he will take steps, without at present re-opening the general question of postal employees' grievances, to make some improvement in the cases cited.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The case of the sub-postmasters was carefully considered by the recent Parliamentary Committee, and I hope shortly to make an announcement as regards certain changes which are contemplated. But I may point out that the number of sub-postmasters who receive as remuneration from £20 to £40 a year is under 6,000 and not over 20,000 as stated by the hon. Member, and that none of them have continuous work for the twelve hours a day during which the offices are open.

The Death Rate in United Kingdom and Germany.

MR. HADDOCK (Lancashire, North Lonsdale): To ask the President of the Local Government Board, what was the reduction in the death rate in Germany and the United Kingdom between the years 1870 and 1906.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) The Registrar-General's figures for England and Wales only give the death rates for the German Empire from 1872 onwards. I have thought it better, therefore, to compare the quinquennia 1872–1876 and 1901–1905, and the single years 1872 and 1905.

Percentage Reduction in Death Rate between	United Kingdom.	German Empire.
	Per cent.	Per cent.
(1) 1872–6 and 1901–5	23	28
(2) 1872 and 1905	26	32

It should be added that, although the German death rate has declined to a greater extent than the English death rate, it remains (in 1905) 19·8 per 1,000 of population as against 15·5 per 1,000 in the United Kingdom. In other words the death rate of Germany in 1905 was 28 per cent. higher than that of the United Kingdom.

Army Reservists Residing Abroad.

COLONEL WARDE (Kent, Medway): To ask the Secretary of State for War, how many men of the Army Reserve are known to be residing abroad, and to what branches of the service do they belong; whether such men continue to be reckoned as forming a part of the Reserve immediately available on the outbreak of war; and whether in the event of the Reservists residing in any of the self-governing Colonies failing to rejoin the colours when called upon, the Army Council can enforce their return, or can take any legal steps to that end outside the jurisdiction of the courts of the United Kingdom.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*)

Return of Army Reservists who have permission to reside Abroad. 1st January, 1908.

Arm of the Service.	Places having Garrisons.													
	Africa, S.	Africa, W.	Bermuda.	Ceylon.	China and Hong Kong.	Egypt.	Gibraltar.	India, including Aden and Burmah.	Indies, W.	Malta.	Straits Settlement.	Jamaica.	Mauritius	Total.
Household Cavalry - -	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Cavalry of the Line - -	160	1	—	1	—	5	—	38	1	—	3	—	—	209
Royal Horse and Field Artillery	85	—	7	2	30	5	13	119	—	6	14	—	1	282
Royal Garrison Artillery - -	21	—	7	2	27	—	11	48	—	6	13	—	1	136
Royal Engineers - - -	48	—	1	1	2	8	—	2	—	—	1	—	—	63
Foot Guards - - -	48	—	—	—	1	—	1	2	—	—	1	—	—	53
Infantry of the Line - -	169	—	5	2	26	27	8	389	10	12	20	1	1	670
Army Service Corps - -	71	1	—	—	4	3	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	81
Army Ordnance Corps - -	5	1	1	—	1	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	10
Royal Army Medical Corps -	49	—	—	—	1	—	2	—	2	—	1	—	—	55
Royal Malta Artillery - -	—	—	—	—	—	11	—	—	—	426	—	—	—	437
Total - - -	656	3	21	8	92	60	36	598	14	450	55	1	3	1,997

Return of Army Reservists who have permission to reside Abroad. 1st January, 1908.—*continued.*

Arm of the Service.	Other places.																		
	At Sea.	America, N.*	America, S.*	Australia.	Canada,	France.	Germany.	New Zealand.	Uganda.	To traevl.	Siam.	Switzerland.	Abyssinia.	Canary Islands.	British New Guinea.	Malay States.	Falkland Islands.	Total.	Grand total.
Household Cavalry - -	—	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	5
Cavalry of the Line - -	61	17	—	15	299	—	—	6	—	15	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	352	622
Royal Horse and Field Artillery -	134	22	—	16	558	—	1	11	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	609	1,025
Royal Garrison Artillery - -	62	8	—	9	301	—	—	3	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	322	520
Royal Engineers - - -	23	20	2	8	195	—	—	5	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	231	317
Foot Guards - - - -	44	7	—	7	245	—	—	2	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	263	360
Infantry of the Line - -	522	71	11	55	1,522	4	1	34	—	—	—	—	1	1	1	1	1	1,703	2,895
Army Service Corps - -	43	6	1	3	146	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	158	282
Army Ordnance Corps - -	3	—	—	1	13	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	15	28
Royal Army Medical Corps -	27	4	2	5	89	—	—	4	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	105	187
Royal Malta Artillery - -	5	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	444
Total - - -	924	155	16	120	3,372	4	2	68	3	16	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	3,764	6,685

*Exclusive of British Possessions.

Official Advertisements in the Press.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if instructions have been given to Government Departments that official advertisements are to be withheld from Conservative and Unionist newspapers with large circulations and given to Radical newspapers with small circulations; and, in such case, if full particulars will be laid upon the Table of all such subventions.

(*Answered by Mr. Whiteley.*) The Answer is in the negative.

Prices of Wheat.

Mr. REMNANT (Finsbury, Holborn): To ask the President of the Board of Trade what were the average prices of wheat in France and Germany for each of the months of the year 1907, and also at Liverpool and on Mark Lane for the same periods.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The following statements contain the information desired by the hon. Member as far as it can be given. In Statement A the French and German prices of wheat are compared with the *Gazette* average price of British wheat in England and Wales. Statement B is a comparison of prices at London, Liverpool, Berlin, and Paris, the London price being the *Gazette* average for British wheat on the London market, and the Liverpool price the monthly mean of the quotations for a representative grade of imported wheat. Liverpool is not a returning market under the "Corn Returns Act."

(A.) Statement showing the Average Price of Wheat per Imperial Quarter in England and Wales, France, and Germany during each month of the year, 1907.

Month.	England and Wales (*Gazette* Average Price of British Wheat.)	France (Official Average).	Germany (Average Price).
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
January - -	26 1	39 7	38 2
February - -	26 6	39 7	39 1
March - -	26 9	40 0	39 4
April - -	26 8	38 9	40 5
May - -	28 1	40 3	43 6
June - -	31 6	42 6	44 9
July - -	32 2	44 0	45 6
August - -	33 6	42 7	45 4
September - -	31 7	39 10	47 0
October - -	33 11	39 10	48 10
November - -	35 3	40 2	48 4
December - -	33 7	39 6	46 2
Mean for the year -	30 7	40 7	43 10

(B.) Statement showing the Average Price of Wheat per Imperial Quarter at London, Liverpool, Berlin, and Paris during each month of the year 1907.

Month.	London (*Gazette* Average of British Wheat).		Liverpool (mean of Weekly Quotations for "No. 2 Red Winter Wheat").		Berlin (Average Price).		Paris (Official Average).	
	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
January - -	27	3	29	6	38	6	40	4
February -	27	7	30	4	39	7	40	2
March - -	28	1	30	0	40	6	40	0
April - -	27	6	29	8	41	8	39	10
May - -	29	2	32	2	43	9	41	9
June - -	32	1	33	8	44	1	44	5
July - -	33	3	34	11	44	10	46	6
August - -	33	1	33	11	45	9	43	9
September -	32	9	36	4	48	2	40	6
October - -	35	5	39	6	48	11	39	3
November -	36	6	38	5	48	5	38	5
December -	35	6	37	1	46	9	38	5
Mean for the year	31	6	33	9	44	3	41	1

Manning of Fleet during Christmas Leave.

MR. NIELD (Middlesex, Ealing): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, prior to Christmas, the ships of all fleets in Home waters dispersed to their respective ports to give Christmas leave; and whether any organised fleet of battleships, cruisers, and destroyers is kept fully manned ready to proceed to sea at the shortest possible notice.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The Answer to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative, except that the Channel Fleet remained at Portland and gave Christmas leave from there. In regard to the second part of the Question, it is obvious that whenever leave is given from a fleet it must be temporarily under-manned, but arrangements are made to recall the men on leave by telegram if required.

Blasphemy Prosecution.

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON (Northumberland, Tyneside): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the prosecution for blasphemy, recently instituted, was decided on because of apprehensions of breach of the peace; and, if so, on what those apprehensions were founded; whether he has considered the expediency of guarding against alleged breach of the peace by other legal procedure; and whether it is proposed henceforth to institute prosecutions in cases in which, at political and other meetings, language is used which might conceivably promote breach of the peace.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) Proceedings were taken because it was necessary to protect the public against grossly indecent and ribald language used in a public street, language of such a character as to shock and outrage the feelings of those passing in the street, and, if persisted in, to render a breach of the peace inevitable. Many similar offences can be dealt with under the Police Acts, but in this case the police were advised that only procedure under the Blasphemy Act was available; and when the case came for trial the jury convicted without leaving the box. As regards the last part of the Question, I cannot answer a hypothetical question, but I may say that under identical or analogous circumstances the same action would again be taken. The case has no connection with, or bearing on, speeches at political meetings.

Taxation of Licensed Houses for Compensation Funds.

MR. BARNARD (Kidderminster): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, (1) whether he can give the number of pre-1869 beer-house licences that were in existence at the passing of the 1904 Licensing Act; (2) how much has been contributed by the owners of these houses to the compensation fund in the financial years of 1905, 1906, and 1907; (3) how many of them have been suppressed during these years; (4) how much money has been collected from the trade under Goschen's Act; (5) will he state the purposes to which Mr. Goschen originally intended to apply that money; (6) and how much has the war tax of 1s. per barrel on beer and 6d. on spirits yielded since the termination of the war.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) (1) The numbers of ante-1869 beer-houses have never been ascertained with certainty; but it is believed that, out of the total number of 31,942 beer-houses in existence on 1st January, 1905, *i.e.*, when the Licensing Act, 1904, came into operation, the ante-1869 beer-houses numbered 28,000 and upwards. (2) Owing to the absence of exact records it is not possible to say how much has been contributed by the owners of ante-1869 beer-houses to the compensation fund. (3) The number of ante-1869 beer-houses extinguished with compensation in the years 1905, 1906, and 1907, is believed to be 1,673. This number is exclusive of the ante-1869 beer-houses (believed to number 277) which have come to an end without compensation for various causes in the same three years. (4) The total sum derived from the additional duties on beer and spirits imposed by the Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1890 (to which presumably my hon. friend refers), up to 31st March, 1907, amounted to £21,087,970. (5) It appears from the Budget Statement of 17th April, 1890, that the original intention of the Government was to devote about one-quarter of the proceeds of these additional duties to the "purchase of licences," and the remainder to various local purposes (see *Hansard*, Vol. 343, Col. 734). (6) The estimated yield of the additional 1s. per barrel on beer and 6d. per gallon on spirits from the termination of the war up to 31st March last, amounted to £8,557,000 and £4,152,000 respectively.

Losses on Small Holdings Schemes.

MR. HICKS BEACH (Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, when a Treasury Minute will be issued giving an undertaking that, in the event of the Small Holdings Commissioners carrying out a scheme where the county council have declined to do so for fear of incurring a loss, and such scheme does result in a loss, the whole of such loss shall be borne by the Treasury.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) A Treasury Minute, dated 31st December, 1907, stating the conditions under which one-half of any loss incurred by a local authority in carrying out a scheme under the Act would be paid from public funds, was communicated to county councils and county boroughs by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries on the 25th ultimo, and was also sent to the Press. No undertaking was ever given that, where a loss is entailed by action of the Commissioners in default of a council, the whole of that loss should be borne by the Treasury. The Act empowers the Treasury in such cases to pay the whole or any part of such loss, but each case must be considered on its merits and in relation to the surrounding circumstances.

Suggested Tax on Theatre and Entertainment Tickets.

MR. BOTTOMLEY (Hackney, S.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will consider the expediency of imposing a tax upon theatre and other entertainment tickets, as is at present done in various Continental countries.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) Yes, Sir. This, like all other suggestions which I receive on the subject of taxation, shall have my most careful consideration.

Raids into British Territory by Afridis.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he will state how many raids by Afridis into British territory have taken place during the past four months; and whether it is intended to despatch a punitive expedition from Peshawur against this tribe.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) The number of raids by Zakka Khel specially reported since 1st October, by the Government of India is eleven. None of these raids can be classed with mere border disturbances such as are frequent on the tribal frontier. They were all serious raids organised for purposes of plunder, and executed by armed bands of Zakka Khel beyond the limits of tribal territory, and in the area under the direct administration of the Government of India. In these raids nine of our people were killed and thirteen wounded. Among the killed were six police and two native soldiers, and among the wounded eight police and one native soldier. Also large quantities of property, including rifles, were carried off. All the usual methods of bringing about a settlement between the elders of the tribe and the political officer have failed. Of the raids mentioned above three occurred in January. On 3rd January at Jalozai, 15 miles south-east of Peshawur, two Government employees were mortally wounded and forty-one mules were carried off. On 24th January the railway station at Kacha Garhi, between Peshawur and Jamrud, was raided, one of the station staff being severely wounded. On 29th January, a gang raided in Peshawur city, escaping with property estimated at a lakh after killing one police constable and wounding two others. In addition to the above, two further raids attributed to Zakka Khel have been reported on the 7th and 8th February. In the one, at Abazai village, the raiders looted the house of a Hindu who was shot. In the other, at Tirchi Bala, in the Peshawur district, they looted the house of a Hindu and removed cash and jewels to the value of Rs. 800. In these circumstances His Majesty's Government have sanctioned punitive measures against the tribe.

Whipping in India.

SIR HENRY COTTON (Nottingham, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Bill for the Amendment of the Whipping Act, now under consideration in India, contains a provision that no whipping shall be inflicted by order of a court unless and until the person convicted has had a reasonable opportunity of carrying his case before a Court of Appeal.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) As I informed the hon. Member on the 5th instant, the amendments of the law are under the consideration of the Government of India, and I am not yet in a position to state the nature of the amendments proposed.

Land Purchases in County Clare.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state how much land has been purchased, either actually or by agreement, under the Land Act of 1903, in County Clare up to the end of 1907; what has been the amount of purchase money; how many tenants have bought; and how much untenanted land is available for purchase in the county.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that agreements have been entered into for the purchase of 111,232 acres of land in County Clare for £854,410, and of this 24,845 acres, of which the price was

£197,036, had been invested in 720 tenant purchasers on 31st December, 1907. The Commissioners have entered into negotiations for the purchase of 10,598 acres of untenanted land in the county, of which 1,668 acres have already been purchased.

Abandonment of Construction of Road from Glenarm to Feystown.

Mr. DEVLIN (Belfast, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he could state the circumstances under which the Antrim County Council rescinded, in February, 1907, a resolution passed by that body in December, 1902, with reference to a new road from Glenarm to Feystown; and whether, seeing that this action of the council has resulted in loss to the promoters of the road and a continuance of inconvenience to a large section of the ratepayers, he will consider the advisability of ordering a Local Government Board inquiry into the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The reason assigned by the Antrim County Council for abandoning the proposal to make the new road referred to is that the cost of obtaining the necessary land and making the road would be quite out of proportion to the usefulness of the road. The land could only be obtained by the exercise of compulsory powers, and it is stated that the line of the road passes through a quarry. The Local Government Board would have no power to interfere in the matter unless upon appeal by the rural district council, and no such appeal has been made to them.

Aghalee, County Antrim, Labourers Cottage Scheme.

Mr. J. DEVLIN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the fact that the Aghalee, county Antrim, District Council approved of a scheme for the erection of forty-three labourers cottages in February, 1907, but that, up to the present, no inspection for these cottages has been made by the Local Government Board; whether about the same time a number of labourers, whose claims were rejected by the council, petitioned the Local Government Board to hold an inquiry, and that the Board consented, but that no inquiry has yet been held; and, if so, whether he will direct the Local Government Board to take action in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The scheme in question was not submitted by the rural district council to the Board for confirmation until 14th October last, and on examination of the documents it was found that the provisions of the Acts as to advertisement of schemes had not been complied with. As the Board had no power to dispense with this requirement, the scheme was sent back for due publication, and it was again presented to the Board on 23rd December. The application was then dealt with as quickly as possible, and arrangements have already been made for the holding of a local inquiry, which will be opened on the 12th instant.

Cattle-driving by Person Bound Over to Keep the Peace.

Mr. STAVELEY-HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the number of persons reported as having taken part in cattle-drives after being bound to keep the peace and to be of good behaviour; and in how many cases have applications been made by the Crown to estreat the recognisances of such persons, and with what result.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I am informed that two cases only have been reported in which persons who have been bound to the peace have again taken part in cattle-driving. In one of the cases the recognisances of the person concerned were ordered to be estreated. In the other case some of the owners whose cattle were driven took part themselves in the drive; and it was decided that proceedings could not be successfully taken in the case. One of the persons identified had been bound to the peace in connection with a previous case of cattle-driving; but in the circumstances no action to estreat his recognisances was taken.

Evicted Tenants' Rejected Applications.

Mr. WILLIAM O'BRIEN (Cork): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to the fact that considerable hardship has been caused to a class of particularly deserving evicted tenants owing to the regulations of 13th February, 1906, under which 2,995 applications have been rejected, one of the reasons for rejection being that applicants are unsuitable to work land by reason of their age and infirmity, or without purpose to work it and not to sell or assign it; will he inquire whether the effect of this regulation has been to deprive of redress, under Section 2 of the Purchase Act of 1903, applicants in broken health or reduced to extreme poverty owing to the length of time during which they have been excluded from their old homes and means of livelihood; whether consequently the rejection of such applications is a contravention of the object of the Act in respect of a class of evicted tenants with special claims to consideration; and whether under the circumstances, he will so modify the regulations as to give the Estates Commissioners a larger discretion in dealing with such cases.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The regulation to which the hon. Member refers is No. VI. of the regulations dated 13th February, 1906, the last paragraph of which provides that the Estates Commissioners shall not sell a parcel of land to any person of whose farming experience, habits of industry, and competence to work the land as a holding the Commissioners are not reasonably satisfied. The Commissioners inform me that they have not rejected applications because of the poverty of the applicants. On the contrary, they have given farms to evicted tenants who had for many years been employed as labourers, and have provided them with houses and stock when they were physically able to work the land and were otherwise suitable. But when the applicant was wholly unfit to work the land, and there were no members of his or her family able or willing to assist in the working of it, the Commissioners have refused the application. In the Commissioners' opinion it would not be in accordance with the intention of the Act to give land to persons manifestly unable to work it in a husband-like manner, with the result that they would merely transfer it to other persons. The procedure of the Estates Commissioners appears to have been adequately imbued with the spirit of consideration which inspires the hon. Member's Question, and I think he will agree that a modification of the regulations is neither necessary nor desirable.

Police Injured in Cattle Drives.

MR. STAVELEY-HILL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, if he can state the number of policemen who have received injuries since 30th June, 1907, in connection with cases of cattle-driving.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Inspector-General of the Royal Irish Constabulary informs me that six policemen have been injured in connection with cases of cattle-driving. The number of such cases was three, the police in each case consisting of a patrol of two men. In two of the cases the injury to the police was not serious; in the third case the two policemen were severely beaten.

Losses of Loan Funds in County Tyrone.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH (Fermanagh, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has had his attention directed to a memorial presented to the Attorney-General for Ireland by Mr. John Owens, J.P., on behalf of the debenture holders of a number of loan funds in Tyrone, Donegal, and Fermanagh; and whether, having regard to the fact that these loan funds were rendered insolvent by the effect of a decision of the Queen's Bench Division in 1896, upsetting the practice of over half a century, carried on under the management of a Government Department, and that the money lost represents the savings of persons in a humble rank of life who trusted their money to the loan funds on the security of their being under Government control and audit through the Loan Fund Board, any steps will be taken by the Irish Government to assist the people whose money has been lost through no fault of their own.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The hon. and learned Member is mistaken in supposing that the Government are in any way responsible for loss which may have been sustained by debenture holders in loan fund societies. In the first place the Loan Fund Board is not a Government Department, and the Government are not responsible for the administration of the Board. The fact is that a large amount of money was irregularly lent by certain loan fund societies which are under local management, and that these loans were irrecoverable. In 1906, the Government procured legislation which provided, so far as they thought possible and just, for the recovery by such societies of debts which had legally lapsed. As regards the responsibility of the Loan Fund Board, I am informed by the Board that they called the attention of the local managers from time to time to the irregularities which were discovered by the Loan Fund Inspector. The Government cannot further assist, by legislation or otherwise, the people whose money may have been lost.

Indian Mutiny Veterans in Workhouses.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for War, what, so far as he is aware, is the number of the veterans of the Indian Mutiny who, at the recent banquet in commemoration of the jubilee of that episode in English history, left various workhouses to attend that banquet and subsequently returned to those workhouses.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Inquiries have been made to enable me to give the hon. Member some information on the subject. I have been informed by the honorary secretary of the Veteran's Relief Fund that, as a large number of the applications to attend the dinner were made by relations and friends of the veterans on their behalf, it is not possible to give any accurate information. The men who came from workhouses were particularly unwilling to admit that they were so accommodated.

Loch Long Torpedo Range.

MR. J. D. WHITE (Dumbartonshire): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what are the areas of the land and foreshore, respectively, of the property bordering on Loch Long recently purchased by the Admiralty in connection with the Loch Long torpedo range; when and from whom that property was purchased; what was the price paid; and whether the purchase was effected under compulsory powers.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The area of land is 4·17 acres. All foreshore rights that the owner possessed in the foreshore fronting the land are being acquired; but the area is not defined. The land has not been purchased, but is being taken on a feu from Sir Alan Colquhoun. The feu charter is not yet completed, and the annual feu duty is £12 per acre. Compulsory powers were not exercised.

MR. J. D. WHITE: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, what are the areas of land and foreshore, respectively, of the property near Greenock, recently purchased by the Admiralty for purposes in connection with the Loch Long torpedo range; when and from whom that property was purchased; what was the price paid; and whether the purchase was effected under compulsory powers.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson*). The area acquired is 10 acres of land, 4¾ acres of foreshore. This property is being purchased from Sir M. H. Shaw Stewart, Baronet. The purchase has not yet been formally completed, but the Admiralty are in possession of the property. The price to be paid is £27,225; the Admiralty will also pay costs. A "notice to treat," under the Defence Act, was served with a view to compulsory purchase, but the price was subsequently settled by agreement.

American Gooseberry Mildew.

MR. GWYNN (Galway): To ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland), what steps, if any, are being taken to deal with the American gooseberry mildew under the Destructive Insects Act; if the Board will publish returns showing the injury being done by this pest in various counties; and whether the Board are taking steps to prevent the introduction into Ireland, by the import of diseased seed potatoes, of the new potato disease known as black scab (chrysophlyctis endobiotica).

(*Answered by Mr. T. W. Russell.*) The Department have drafted an Orde dealing with American gooseberry mildew under the Destructive Insects and Pests Acts, which will be issued at an early date. The Department have ascertained that this pest existed in parts of the following counties during the past years: Antrim, Cavan, Clare, Down, Kerry, King's, Kilkenny, Londonderry, Meath, Queen's, Roscommon, Tipperary, N.R., Tipperary, S.R., Tyrone, Waterford, and Wexford. The Department are not aware of the existence in Ireland of the disease known as black scab in potatoes; but they have taken steps to warn the recently appointed seed inspectors to watch for and report any case which may come under their notice.

Grants in Aid of Irish Lace Industry.

MR. O'MALLEY (Galway, Connemara): To ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland), whether, in view of the fact that many of the convent and village lace industries of Ireland are not in a position to incur any serious financial outlay on their own behalf, and of the desirability that exists for encouraging this class of work amongst cottagers, His Majesty's Government will consider the advisability of taking steps to insure that these industries may be adequately represented at, and placed in a position to reap the advantages of participation in the Exhibition of British and Irish Lace which is to be held in London next month; and whether there are any public funds available that could be used for this purpose.

(*Answered by Mr. T. W. Russell.*) The Department have considered the matter, and do not propose to take part in the exhibition referred to. They do not think it necessary to afford any aid additional to that now rendered to lace industries in order to enable them to exhibit at the exhibition.

Foreign Advertisements in the Board of Trade Journal.

MR. BONAR LAW (Camberwell, Dulwich): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether any instructions have been given to exclude the advertisements of foreign firms from the *Board of Trade Journal.*

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The Answer is in the negative.

Pensions of Ex-Service Men in the Civil Service.

SIR HENRY KIMBER (Wandsworth): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether Civil Servants of the State who have previously served in the naval or military services are allowed to count the time of their service in the latter for pension in the Civil Service; whether a person who commences to serve the State at the age of twenty in a military capacity for seven years and then joins the Civil Service is unable to obtain full Civil Service pension as he cannot give forty years' service in the Civil Service but must retire at fifty-eight and count nine years less for pension than a person who entered the Civil Service at the age of twenty and who could retire on a full pension at sixty; and whether any action has, or will be, taken on the Report of Sir Edward Ward's Committee on the Unemployment of Discharged Soldiers and Sailors to remove, by legislation or otherwise, this disadvantage of ex-soldier and sailor civil servants.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) As regards the general question raised by the hon. Baronet I must refer him to my Answer to the hon. Member for Mile End on the 3rd instant. Civil servants of the State who have previously served in the naval or military services are not allowed to reckon their services in the latter for pension in the Civil Service. They are not required to retire at fifty-eight, but at sixty or sixty-five as the case may be.

Subscription to the International Seismic Association.

LORD R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Government have decided to subscribe £200 towards a German institute for seismological inquiries; whether any similar assistance has been given to any similar British institution; and, if not, what is the reason for this preference for foreign enterprise.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) A subscription of £160 a year is paid, not to a German institute for seismological inquiries, but to the International Seismic Association which His Majesty's Government have joined for a period of four years, as the share of this country in the expense of the central bureau. No subscription is paid to any other seismological institution.

Return of Undelivered Vaccination Exemption Declarations.

MR. LEHMANN (Leicestershire, Market Harborough): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that on 1st January Mr. J. H. Moore, of 7, Silver Street, Gainsborough, posted to the local vaccination authority of that place a declaration of conscientious objection, but omitted to stamp it, in the belief that it would go free, being marked O.H.M.S.; that this was surcharged and that the vaccination officer refused to accept it; that Mr. Moore did not receive it again from the Post Office authorities, and is consequently threatened with prosecution under the Vaccination Acts; and will he give instructions to all post offices in England and Wales that declarations of conscientious objection found in the Returned Letter Office shall be returned to the senders, whether the letter bears a ½d. stamp or not.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The packet to which the hon. Member refers should have been prepaid ½d. As it was refused by the addressee it was, no doubt, disposed of at the office of destination in accordance with the regulations respecting undelivered ½d. packets. The sender of any ½d. packet may secure its return to him in case of non-delivery by printing or writing his name and address, with a request for return, on the outside of the packet. In view of the practical difficulty in affording exceptional treatment to any particular class of packet bearing no such request, I am sorry that I do not see my way to giving instructions for the special selection for return of declarations of conscientious objection to vaccination.

Post Office Savings Bank Funds.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: To ask the Postmaster-General if he will state what, on 31st December, 1907, was the total amount due to depositors in the Post Office Savings Bank; what amount of Consols was sold during the year 1907, and at what average price, what was the amount of Consols held on account of the Post Office Savings Bank on 31st December, 1907, and what is the cost price on balance of the Consols held at that date; what is the deficiency in the capital account on 31st December, 1907, estimating the assets at the market price of the day; what is the deficiency, if any, in the income account for the year ended 31st December, 1907; and what amount of gold is held as a reserve against the liability to depositors.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) The total amount due to depositors in the Post Office Savings Bank at the end of 1907 was estimated at £157,518,000. The amount of Consols sold from the Post Office Savings Bank Fund during the year 1907 was £2,193,464, at an average price of £84 3s. 5d. per cent. The amount of Consols held on account of the Fund at 31st December, 1907, was £59,072,319. The cost price on balance of this stock works out at £103 6s. 5d. per cent. The deficiency in the income account of the Fund for the year ended 31st December, 1907, is estimated to amount to £88,190.

Sale of Tuberculous Cattle.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, if he is aware that cattle in the last stages of tuberculosis are occasionally exposed for sale and food in the open market, with consequent risk of spread of the disease and danger to human life; and if he proposes to take any steps, by legislation or otherwise, in order that persons submitting dying diseased cattle for sale may be prosecuted.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) My hon. friend has asked me to reply to this Question. My attention has been called to the subject referred to in it, and in September last I caused a circular to be issued to local authorities bringing the matter under their notice, in order that they might, as far as possible, exercise supervision over the cattle in their districts with a view to anticipating and so averting possible or intended infringement of the law. I also suggested that suitable officers of the local authority should be instructed to watch closely the cattle markets, slaughter houses, and knackers' yards in the district, with the view of satisfying themelves that no animal, the condition of which appears to render it unfit for human consumption, is disposed of in such a manner that it is likely to be used for this purpose.

Quality of Paper of Irish Ordnance Map.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH: To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, who is responsible for the quality of the paper on which the Ordnance maps in Ireland are now printed or engraved; were the Ordnance maps until recently printed or engraved in Ireland, and where are they now done; and, having regard to the number of these maps now required in connection with land purchase, will he represent to the proper authority that they should be printed or engraved on paper on which ink and colours will not run, the paper at present in use being little more than blotting paper.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) The Director-General of the Ordnance Survey is responsible for the quality of the paper on which the Ordnance maps in Ireland are printed. So far as it is possible all maps of Ireland are prepared and printed in Ireland, but no facilities exist at the Ordnance Survey Office in Dublin for printing in colours, and printing of that class is therefore carried out at Southampton. If the hon. Member will let me know the particular maps of which he complains, we should be glad to make inquiry into the matter.

Trustee Savings Bank Funds.

MR. MACNEILL: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will state what, on 20th November, 1907, was the total amount due to depositors in the Trustee Savings Banks: what amount of Consols was sold during the year ended 20th November, 1907, and at what average price; what was the amount of Consols held on account of the trustee Savings Banks on 20th November, 1907, and what is the cost price on balance of the Consols so held; what is the deficiency in the capital account of the Trustee Savings Banks on 20th November, 1907, estimating the assets at the market price of the day; what is the deficiency, if any, in the income account for the year ended 20th November, 1907; and what amount of gold is held as a reserve against the liability to depositors.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) The figures showing the total amount due to depositors in the Trustee Savings Banks are not yet available; but it is estimated that the amount is something over £52,000,000. The amount of Consols sold from the Trustee Savings Banks Fund in the year ended 20th November, 1907, was £327,573, at an average price of £85 0s. 3d. per cent. The amount of Consols held on account of the fund at 20th November, 1907, was £17,347,487. The cost price on balance of this stock works out at £94 3s. 6d. per cent. Since the Act of 1904, as has been explained on previous occasions, no valuation of the capital account is published, and the information is not available. The deficiency in the income account of the fund for the year ended 20th November, 1907, amounts to £7,327 19s. 5d. No gold is held as a reserve.

The Council of the Secretary of State for India.

MR. ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): To ask the Secretary of State for India, who are now members of the Council of the Secretary of State; what was the previous official career, if any, of each member; what was the date of his appointment; and what is the date of its expiration.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) The following are the particulars asked for including the principal official services, if any, of each Member of Council:—

Name.	Previous Official Career.	Date of Appointment.	Date on which tenure of Office will expire.
Mackay, Sir James Lyle, G.C.M.G., K.C.I.E.	President of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, 1890–3. Member of the Governor-General's Legislative Council, 1891. His Majesty's Special Commissioner for Commercial Negotiations with China, 1901–2. Re-appointed Member of Council for five years from 27th April, 1907, under 32 and 33 Vic. c. 97, sec. 3.	27th April, 1907.	26th April, 1912.
Edge, Sir John, Kt., LL.B., K.C.	Chief Justice, North-Western Provinces, 1886–98. Member of Royal Commission on South African War, 1902.	30th March, 1898.	29th March, 1908.
Hutchins, Sir Philip Perceval, K.C.S.I.	Judge of the High Court, Madras, 1883. Member of the Council of the Governor of Madras, 1886. Member of the Governor-General's Council, 1888. Secretary, Judicial and Public Department, India Office, 30th November, 1893 to 31st July, 1898.	1st August, 1898.	31st July, 1908.
Lee, Warner, Sir William, K.C.S.I.	Additional Member of the Governor-General's Council, 1893. Resident in Mysore and Chief Commissioner of Coorg, 1895. Secretary, Political and Secret Department, India Office, 18th September, 1895 to 11th November, 1902.	12th November, 1902.	11th November, 1912.
Barnes, Sir Hugh Shakespeare, K.C.S.I., K.C.V.O.	Resident and Agent for the Governor-General in Baluchistan, 1896. Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign Department, 1900. Lieutenant-Governor of Burma, 1903.	9th May, 1905.	8th May, 1915.
Barr, Lieut.-Colonel Sir David William Keith, K.C.S.I.	Agent for the Governor-General in Central India, 1895. Resident at Hyderabad, 1900.	16th August, 1905.	15th August, 1915.

Name.	Previous Official Career.	Date of Appointment.	Date on which tenure of Office will expire.
Schuster, Sir Felix Otto, Bart.	— —	26th April, 1906.	25th April, 1916.
Morison, Theodore	Formerly Principal of the Mahomedan Anglo-Oriental College, Aligarh.	19th December, 1906.	18th December, 1916.
Egerton, General Sir Charles Comyn, G.C.B., D.S.O.	Assistant Quartermaster-General, Bengal, 1895. Commanding Secunderabad Division, 1904–7. A.D.C. to the Sovereign, 1896–1902.	5th February, 1907.	4th February, 1917.

Appointed for Seven Years under The Council of India Act, 1907.

Lawrence, Sir Walter Roper, Bart., G.C.I.E.	Under-Secretary to the Government of India, Revenue and Agricultural Department, 1886. Settlement Officer, Kashmir, 1889. Private Secretary to the Viceroy (Lord Curzon), 1899–1903.	16th October, 1907.	15th October, 1914.
La Touche, Sir James John Digges, K.C.S.I.	Chief Secretary to Government, North-Western Provinces and Ough, 1893. Additional Member of Viceroy's Legislative Council, 1897 and 1899. Lieutenant - Governor, North-Western Provinces and Oudh, 1901.	1st November, 1907.	31st October, 1914.
Bilgrami, Saiyid Husain, C.S.I.	Formerly Director of Public Instruction, Hyderabad, and Member of the Governor-General's Legislative Council.	11th November, 1907.	10th November, 1914.

Name.	Previous Official Career.	Date of Appointment.
Gupta, Krishna Gobinda.	Commissioner of Excise, Bengal, 1893, Commissioner of a Division, 1901. Member of the Board of Revenue, Bengal, 1905.	Appointment will reckon from the date of Mr. Gupta taking up the duties of the office, which he has not yet done.

Appointments for Natives in Public Works Department, India.

MR. HART-DAVIES (Hackney, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether in the reorganisation of the Public Works Department, Indians educated at Indian engineering colleges will be placed on the same footing in every respect as Europeans sent out from Home.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) It is a general rule of the public service in India that officers recruited in India, whether Indians or Europeans, are on a different footing as regards pay, leave, and pension from those who are recruited in England. It is not proposed to make an exception to this general rule in the case of the Public Works Department.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for India, whether he is aware that there is considerable unrest on the North-West Frontier of India; whether he can state the cause; and will he say what is the strength of the British forces surrounding Afghanistan.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) If the hon. Member means political unrest in British territory, I would refer him to what I said in debate on 31st January. If he means the difficulties due to raids of Zakka Khel, who reside in tribal territory beyond the area under the direct administration of the Government of India, I would refer him to my Answer to-day to the hon. Member for Mid Armagh. The distribution of troops along the North-West Frontier of British India can be found in the Indian Army list. In no sense do they surround Afghanistan.

Pension of Constable O'Halloran, R.I.C.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether any, and if so, what compensation by way of increased pension or otherwise has been awarded to Constable O'Halloran, Royal Irish Constabulary, who was shot at and severely wounded near Athenry, when on patrol duty.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) Constable O'Halloran has been awarded a special pension of £52 per annum. The ordinary pension to which he would have been entitled if incapacitated through ill health would be £25 13s. 9d.

Life Saving Apparatus on the West Coast of Ireland.

MR. GWYNN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, if steps have been taken to increase the number of points at which life-saving apparatus is kept on the West Coast of Ireland; if he will state the present number of these points; and if he will call the attention of the Irish Lights Commissioners to the want of a lighted buoy on the western point of the Margaretta Shoal in Galway Bay.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) My right hon. friend has asked me to reply to this Question. Steps have been taken to establish four new life-saving apparatus stations on the West Coast of Ireland viz., at Kilrush, Costello Bay, and at North and South Arran. Life-saving apparatus was previously kept at six stations on the coast between Valentia and Tory Island, not reckoning a number of places at which the belts and lines equipment was provided. As regards the latter portion of the Question, the Board of Trade have lately given their statutory sanction to a proposal made by the Commissioners of Irish Lights to establish a lighting and whistling buoy on the Margaretta Shoal.

Irish Land Purchase Delays.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, how long does the Judicial Commissioner anticipate it would take the Land Commission to deal with and complete the sales to the value of some 34 millions of money in respect of agreements already lodged, even if the money to pay were provided as rapidly as the Land Commission could deal with the agreements.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) This Question appears to have been framed under a misapprehension as to the functions of the Judicial Commissioner of the Land Commission. The Judicial Commissioner deals only with the distribution of the advance after the purchase has been completed, and cannot answer for the previous stages which concern the Estates Commissioners.

Re-valuation of Dublin.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, what progress has been made with the re-valuation of Dublin; how many tenements are there to be valued, and how many have up to the present been valued; when, approximately, does the Commissioner of Valuation anticipate the re-valuation can be completed; and has the Commissioner been given a sufficient staff to enable the work to be done with reasonable speed.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) The Commissioner of Valuation informs me that there are 47,000 rateable hereditaments in the city of Dublin, of which 11,500 have been surveyed, but that he is not yet in a position to fix a date for the completion of the work. He has a sufficient staff to enable it to be done with reasonable speed.

Restoration of Evicted Tenants in County Longford.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, if he will state in how many cases were evicted tenants restored to their original holdings, or equivalent holdings found for them, in county Longford.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) Up to 31st January, 1908, forty-five former tenants or their representatives had been restored to their original holdings, or had been provided with other holdings in lieu thereof, in county Longford.

Sale of the Maconchy Estate, North Longford.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, if he will state the cause of the delay in completing the sale of the Maconchy estate in North Longford; whether he is aware that the tenants have now paid three years' interest in lieu of rent, in addition to the price agreed on between the landlord and tenants; and if, with a view to putting a stop to further loss to them, he will ask the Estates Commissioners to now issue the vesting orders and complete the sale.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that the delay in completing the sale of the estate mentioned in the Question arose through difficulties in dealing with the turbary on the property. This matter has now been disposed of, and a scheme under Sections 4 and 20 of The Irish Land Act, 1903, and regulations under Section 21 of the Act are in course of completion, and when these have been settled the sales to the tenants on the estate will be completed. It is therefore expected that the holdings will be vested in the tenants at an early date.

Untenanted Grazing Land for Sale at Granard, North Longford.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Mr. James W. Bond, D.L., of Fanagh, county Longford, has expressed his willingness to sell the untenanted grazing lands of Asnagh Tully, Ardagullian, and Strokestown, all in the barony of Granard, North Longford, comprising some 4,000 acres of land, if asked to do so; and will he direct the attention of the Estates Commissioners to this matter, and that negotiations may be entered into for the acquirement of this land for the relief of congestion in North Longford.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that they will now approach Mr. Bond in regard to the sale of the untenanted lands referred to in the Question.

Sale of the O'Brien Estate, North Longford.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, what is the present position as regards the sale of the O'Brien estate at Cornakelly and Corglass, in North Longford; and will he urge the Estates Commissioners to afford much required relief to these tenants by now purchasing the estate which is for sale in Judge Ross's Court.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) On 13th January last, the Land Judge signified his approval of the offer of the Estates Commissioners for the purchase of this estate with the object of re-selling it to the tenants, subject to the fulfilment of the condition mentioned in the offer, namely, that the tenants should pay to the receiver such sum, not exceeding in the case of any tenant a half-year's rent, as the Land Judge should direct. It has not yet been notified to the Court that this condition has been fulfilled, but as soon as this is the case the Judge will make a final order accepting the Commissioners' offer for purchase.

Restoration of James Green, Evicted Tenant, of Killywilly, County Cavan.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will say whether the Estates Commissioner have investigated the claim of one James Green, son of Bernard Green, deceased, who was evicted from his holding at Killywilly, county Cavan, held under Mrs. Roe; is this holding in the possession of John T. Montgomery; if so, when did he get possession, and did he pay a fine; and will he say whether there is any prospect of James Green being restored to his father's holding.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners are unable to trace the receipt of any application for reinstatement on behalf of either James or Bernard Green.

Legislation Regarding Milk.

MR. ABEL SMITH (Hertfordshire, Hertford): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that there are several Private Bills containing milk clauses now before Parliament; and whether, considering the importance of the question from a public as well as from an agricultural point of view and the expense now being incurred by local authorities in connection with these Bills, he will be prepared, on an early day, to state definitely if the Government intend to deal with the whole question by general legislation during the present session.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) Perhaps I may be allowed to answer this Question. As I stated on Tuesday last, in reply to a Question from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Derbyshire, the Government are desirous of legislating on the subject of milk supply during the present session.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Royal Marines.

CAPTAIN CRAIG (Down, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty how many Royal Marines, officers, non-commissioned officers and men, respectively, were on the strength on 1st February, 1903, and how many on 1st February, 1908; and whether the Admiralty propose to still further reduce this arm of the service.

VISCOUNT DALRYMPLE (Wigton): I beg also to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what was the number of officers, non-commissioned officers and men of the Royal Marine Artillery and Royal Marine Light Infantry on the 1st October 1905, and the 1st February 1908, respectively; and whether it is proposed to make any further reduction in the strength of the Royal Marines; and, if so, what is the amount of the contemplated reduction.

*THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. LAMBERT, Devonshire, South Molton): Excluding 1,163 band ratings transferred to the Marines since 1903, the numbers were as follow:—

	1st Feb. 1903.	1st Oct. 1905.	1st Feb. 1908.
Officers - - - - -	480	480	458
Warrant Officers - - -	40	41	47
Non-commissioned Officers -	2,309	2,331	2,328
Men - - - - - -	17,086	15,788	14,570
	19,915	18,640	17,403

As regards the last part of the Question, any alteration in the numbers will appear in the Estimates which will be published shortly.

Royal Naval Reserve.

MR. MORTON (Sutherland): On behalf of the hon. Member for Ross and Cromarty, I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state how many second-class Royal Naval Reserve men have been allowed to re-enrol for service up to the age of 45 during each of the five years prior to the 1st April, 1906; will he state how many second-class Royal Naval Reserve men, who were 35 or over on 1st April, 1906, have been allowed to complete their current period of enrolment; and on what ground they have not been allowed to re-enrol for a longer period.

*MR. LAMBERT: The actual re-enrolments in each year were:—1901–2, 806; 1902–3, 615; 1903–4, 556; 1904–5, 688; 1905–6, 462. The actual age of the men at the time of the re-enrolment averaged about 36. The Answer to the second part of the Question is that all have been allowed to complete their current period of enrolment. The Answer to the third part is that these men had reached the age of 35 without qualifying themselves for advancement.

Overtime in Devonport Dockyard.

MR. JOHN WARD (Stoke-on-Trent): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can give the number of men who have worked overtime in His Majesty's Dockyard, Devonport, during the month of January this year; and the average number of hours overtime to each man.

MR. JENKINS (Chatham): I beg also to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty how many men employed in the Devonport dockyard are working overtime, and the extent to which overtime is being worked.

*MR. LAMBERT: The number of men working overtime at Devenport during the month of January was 2,604, the average number of hours worked being approximately one and three-quarters per day per man. On the 6th February the numbers were 1,007, working an average of four hours per day. These figures include men who are permanently employed on overtime for raising steam and similar purposes. The greater portion of this overtime will cease within the next ten days.

MR. JOHN WARD: Has any attempt been made to regulate the conditions of dockyard employment so as to prevent excess at one time and shortness of employment at another?

*MR. LAMBERT: This case arose from exceptional circumstances, and apart from permanent overtime, will cease, I hope, in the course of ten days.

Greenwich Pensions.

MR. A. ALLEN (Christchurch): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether his attention has been called to cases of naval pensioners who, when they enlisted in the Royal Navy, were under the impression that at the age of fifty-five they would receive a supplemental Greenwich pension of 5*d.* a day, but are still without that pension, though in some cases they have passed the age of sixty-five and are incapable of supporting themselves; and, if so, whether he can hold out any hope that such men will receive the pension at an early date.

MR. LAMBERT: Among the large number of men eligible for Greenwich Hospital age pensions there are some known to be over sixty-five years of age. As the available funds do not permit of pensions being awarded to all candidates, it is necessary to fill the vacancies as they occur by selection from among the oldest and most necessitous. Very few men over sixty-five are not receiving Greenwich pensions unless they are in receipt of substantial naval pensions.

Shipbuilding Policy of the Government.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether it is the intention of the Admiralty to continue the policy of building large armoured ships in a period of two years from the date of laying down.

MR. LAMBERT: No change is contemplated at present.

Territorial Army—Efficiency Regulations.

COLONEL SEELY (Liverpool, Abercromby): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War when the regulations as to the conditions of efficiency in the Territorial Army will be issued; and if he can state whether these conditions will differ to any great extent from those now prevailing.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddingtonshire): The regulations are not for the present ready for issue, but in order that all concerned may be informed as to the system of training and the conditions of efficiency of the Territorial Force, a pamphlet is being prepared indicating the lines on which the regulations will be drawn up. This pamphlet will very shortly be issued. The conditions of efficiency under the new system do not differ to any great extent from those which applied to the Volunteers, and are not more onerous but are more elastic in their nature.

Revervists Residing Abroad.

COLONEL WARDE (Kent, Medway): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War how many men of the Army Reserve are known to be residing Abroad, and to what branches of the service do they belong; whether such men continue to be reckoned as forming a part of the Reserve immediately available on the outbreak of war; and whether, in the event of Reservists residing in any of the self-governing Colonies failing to rejoin the colours when called upon, the Army Council can enforce their return, or can take any legal steps to that end outside the jurisdiction of the courts of the United Kingdom.

MR. HALDANE: 6,685 men of the Army Reserve are residing abroad. The detailed figures are too long to read out to the House but I will have them printed and circulated with the Votes and Proceedings. These Reservists are considered as available to make good wastage if, owing to the locality of the theatre of war, we may be unable to utilise them immediately on mobilisation. The question of the best method, etc., of recalling to the colours Reservists residing in the Colonies is now being considered in concert with the Colonial Office, and the Colonial Governments concerned. But it is understood that the Reserve Forces Acts of 1882 and 1906 taken together give the same powers of arrest and punishment of offenders as are possessed in this country.

COLONEL WARDE: Will extra time be allowed for these men to return when called upon to do so?

MR. HALDANE: They must of course come at once. We are watching this matter very closely.

COLONEL WARDE: Will the men permitted to go abroad be allowed travelling expenses when called back to the colours?

MR. HALDANE: We have never undertaken to do that.

Territorial Army Association Secretaries.

*MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether officers of the Imperial Yeomanry are eligible for appointment as secretaries to the Territorial Army Association.

MR. HALDANE: Officers of the Imperial Yeomanry are eligible for these appointments, subject to the conditions that they are seconded from their regiments and further, in the case of any ex-regular officer serving in that force for five or ten years under the provisions of Appendix III or Article 510 of the Pay Warrant, that they are willing to forego the annual retaining fee which would otherwise be paid to them.

Army Contract Inspectors.

MR. RAMSAY MACDONALD (Leicester): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the appointment to the inspectorship of boots, leather, and grindery recently made has been cancelled; whether it is proposed to renew advertisements for the appointment; and whether applicants will in future be selected solely on trade qualifications.

MR. HALDANE: The appointment of the candidate originally selected never took effect. It was cancelled because it was found that he was over the age of 40, which was the limit of age fixed. There was no necessity for renewing the advertisements and a candidate was accordingly selected from the numerous applicants. Mr. F. T. Lovell, late under manager to Messrs. Howlett and White, Limited, of Norwich, has been appointed on a six months probation and took up his duties on the 3rd instant.

Section A, Army Reserve.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, whether modifications in the composition of Section A of the Army Reserve refer to the number, or to the pay, or to the terms of service of that Reserve, and to what extent they affect the surplus.

MR. HALDANE: The Question apparently refers to the explanatory note in the Supplementary Army Estimate. The modifications refer to the maximum number and terms of service of Section A introduced by the Territorial and Reserve Forces Act of which the hon. and gallant Member doubtless is aware. £40,000 is saved on the amount taken in Estimate for the Section.

Madras Landed Estates Bill.

MR. REES: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India a Question of which I have given private notice, viz., whether he is aware that the Madras Government intends to pass the Madras Landed Estates Bill within a few days; that if this course is pursued, the advisers of the landholders in England will have no opportunity of seeing the Bill as amended, and of considering what further representations should be made to the Secretary of State regarding its provisions, and the Secretary of State himself will have no opportunity of seeing what effect has been given to the terms of his despatch; that the Bill is not one of an urgent character, so as to make it necessary to pass it immediately through the Council, to the dissatisfaction of the great landowners of Madras who, rightly or wrongly, are under the impression that their interests are unfairly and prejudicially affected by it.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. MORLEY, Montrose Burghs): I do not quite understand why my hon. friend did not put his notice on the Paper. I have been in communication with the Government of Madras on this subject, and I have satisfied myself that this legislation has not been unduly hurried, and that the zemindars have had full opportunity of representing their views in the Madras Legislative Council. Their interests have at all its stages received the most careful consideration of the Secretary of State in Council. It would be altogether undesirable and contrary to practice to suspend legislation in India in order that private persons in this country may criticise its contents. The zemindars, if they still conceive their interests to be unfavourably affected by the Bill, will doubtless memorialise the Secretary of State in Council. I shall at all times be glad to consider in Council any memorial that they may submit to me through the ordinary channels. My hon. friend need have no doubt that I shall satisfy myself that the Act gives effect to my orders, before it is left to its operation.

Native Labour in the Transvaal Mines.

*MR. REES: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has any official information to the effect that, as stated by Mr. Schumacher during the Recess, the mines of the Transvaal would in future have partially to rely on natives from Central Africa; and whether further recruitment from Nyassaland is contemplated.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): Correspondence on this subject is proceeding. I may, however, say that the Secretary of State will have great difficulty in authorising the resumption of recruiting unless there are strong grounds for believing that the death rate can be very substantially and permanently reduced.

Gold Coast—Tribal Lands.

MR. WEDGWOOD (Newcastle-under-Lyme): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been drawn to the Gold Coast Concession Ordinance of 1900, whereby Native chiefs can sell tribal lands to whites; whether he will ask for a special report on the working of this Ordinance, and the amount of land so alienated, and at what price; and whether he will prevent the passing of similar Ordinances in the northern territories of the Gold Coast or in Northern Nigeria.

MR. CHURCHILL: The Ordinance referred to gives no power to natives to sell tribal land, nor does it give the natives any rights which they did not already possess. It was intended to safeguard and regulate the exercise of their rights, by bringing it under the control of the Government and the Supreme Court of the Colony. The Ordinance was introduced with the approval of a native Member of Council who represented several of the kings and chiefs. It has worked well, and there seems no sufficient reason for calling for such a report as is suggested by the hon. Member. There is no intention of introducing similar legislation in the northern territories of the Gold Coast or in Northern Nigeria.

St. Helena.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Government is doing anything to assist the poverty-stricken people of St. Helena to provide a market for the 1,200 head of cattle on the island; and is he aware that farmers found it necessary to kill calves at birth in order to avoid unprofitable outlay on their rearing.

MR. CHURCHILL: The Secretary of State has seen the statement to which the hon. Member refers. He understands that supplies of fresh meat for His Majesty's ships on the South African Station are already partly made under contract at St. Helena, and that the Admiralty are considering whether it would be possible or economical to ship cattle from the island to South Africa. The War Department has also been approached in the matter, but it appears that the purchase of these cattle for the use of the troops in South Africa would be an infringement of the conditions of existing contracts. It may be added that His Majesty's Government have made grants for industries which it is hoped will benefit the whole community, including the farmers.

Mortality of Native Labour in the Transvaal Mines.

SIR CLEMENT HILL (Shrewsbury): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what is the most recent death rate in the Transvaal mines amongst natives recruited in Portuguese East Africa; and whether any Natives are still recruited for those mines in the Nyassaland Protectorate.

MR. CHURCHILL: The death rate for all natives employed in the mines of the Transvaal for the quarter ended September 30 last was thirty-two per thousand per annum, of which twenty-eight were due to disease, but I cannot give separate figures for the natives from Portuguese East Africa. No recruiting is at present going on in the Nyassaland Protectorate.

MR. LYTTELTON (St. George's, Hanover Square): What is the death rate among the natives recruited in Nyassaland?

MR. CHURCHILL: The figures have been quoted to the House. I cannot recall them for the moment, but if the right hon. Gentleman will put down a Question I will get them.

Dinizulu Trial.

MR. MACKARNESS (Berkshire, Newbury): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the preliminary examination of the chief Dinizulu was conducted in open court, with right of access to the public; whether the examination was based upon any formal charge supported by any sworn information; whether he has been committed for trial; and, if so, upon what charge and before what court.

MR. CHURCHILL: The preliminary examination of Dinizulu has not been held in public. The circumstances are reported by the Governor in his despatch of 28th December printed at page 217 of Cd. 3,888. The same Blue-book contains some of the sworn information on which I understand the Colonial Government relies. With regard to the charges the Governor has telegraphed as follows: Following are charges in warrants—(1) High treason; (2) Contravening the provisions of Section 44 of Act No. 1 of 1906 known as the Firearms and Ammunition Act of 1905; (3) Sedition and rebellion; (4) (*a*) Murder, (*b*) being an accessory to the crime of murder, (*c*) conspiracy to murder, (*d*) inciting to murder. The Secretary of State has not yet been informed that Dinizulu has been committed for trial. The trial will be before the Supreme Court.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): Has the attention of the right hon. Gentleman been called to the statement that the barrister employed to defend Dinizulu has decided to give up his brief and return home in consequence of the obstacles which he alleges were placed in his way in obtaining evidence for the defence, and will the right hon. Gentleman make close inquiry into the matter, so that Dinizulu may at least get a fair trial?

MR. CHURCHILL: My attention has been directed to the statement which appears in the newspapers, but at present I have only newspaper authority for it. In view of the special conditions which were attached to Dinizulu's return to South Africa, the Secretary of State representing His Majesty's Government is bound to give earnest and persistent attention to the whole course of this matter.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Will the right hon. Gentleman direct his earnest and immediate attention to the statements made by Mr. Jellicoe publicly that in Zululand unresisting natives had been shot, and in several cases flogged? Those statements are made on the authority of an English professional gentleman.

MR. CHURCHILL: I think I should prefer to deal with the question of Dinizulu apart from other matters.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to give the right hon. Gentleman notice that I will call his attention to these statements.

MR. MACKARNESS: Are we to understand that the charges of murder and incitement to murder are not charges of murdering a particular person or inciting to murder on a particular occasion, but are vague charges.

MR. CHURCHILL: I read to the House the words of the telegram we received, which constitute the capital charges so far as they have been imparted to us.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Will the Government inquire whether it is a fact that Miss Colenso was not permitted to have interviews with Dinizulu?

MR. CHURCHILL: There has been a lot of telegraphic correspondence on that subject.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: What is the upshot of it?

LORD R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.): Under the law of Natal, is it possible to bring any one to trial for murder without alleging who was murdered?

MR. CHURCHILL: I cannot answer that Question without notice, but the point certainly occurred to me.

Canadian Coasting Trade Regulations.

MR. EVELYN CECIL (Aston Manor): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what are the recent changes which the Canadian Government have made in the regulations affecting British and foreign shipping in Canadian coasting waters; what foreign nations who now engage in Canadian coasting trade are affected by these changes; whether the Law Officers of the Crown have been consulted as to the bearing of foreign treaties upon freedom of action by Canada as regards coasting trade generally; and, if so, what action, if any, has been take upon their opinion.

MR. CHURCHILL: The Canadian Government has issued an Order in Council to take effect from 1st January next, repealing certain Orders in Council under which the vessels of Italy, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, Austro-Hungary, Denmark, Belgium and the Argentine Republic have been allowed to participate in the coasting trade of the Dominion. That coasting trade will, therefore, after the date in question be confined to British ships. The hon. Member will see from the statement at pages 492–493 of the Papers laid before the Colonial Conference (Cd. 3524) that there are no treaties which entitle any foreign country to participate in the coating trade of the Dominion. It has not, therefore, been thought necessary to consult the Law Officers in the matter.

New Hebrides Convention.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the

Colonies whether he can say what will be the housing accommodation provided for Natives under the Convention; and what will be the scale of food.

Mr. CHURCHILL: The Secretary of State has just received a report from the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific on his recent visit to the New Hebrides to proclaim the Convention. In that report it is stated that the British and French High Commissioners have instructed the Resident Commissioners to prepare regulations on recruiting and the conditions of labour. These regulations will of course contain all necessary provisions on the subject of the housing accommodation and the scale of food of natives employed by Europeans in the New Hebrides.

Major ANSTRUTHER-GRAY (St. Andrews Burghs): Will the Report be issued to the House?

Mr. CHURCHILL: I have not read it yet. That point will be considered.

Mr. J. WARD (Stoke-on-Trent): Will the regulations drawn up by the Resident Commissioner be laid before the House?

Mr. CHURCHILL: No, Sir; but the instructions given to the Commissioner have already been published and I understand have met with a considerable amount of approval.

Ill-Treatment of Natives in the New Hebrides.

Sir GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether under new instructions issued to the High Commissioner of the Pacific under the New Hebrides Convention, any penalty or punishment may be inflicted for ill-treatment of Natives other than the termination of contract.

Mr. CHURCHILL: It is unnecessary to make any provision in instructions from His Majesty's Government for the punishment of British subjects ill-treating natives, as such punishment is already prescribed, both by the Convention of the 20th October, 1906, and by the Pacific Order in Council, 1893, as the hon. Gentleman will not fail to perceive if he reads Articles LIV. (1) and LV (1). of the Convention, and Articles 23 and 49 of the Pacific Order in Council, 1893.

Sir GILBERT PARKER: Do these articles exactly cover cases of ill-treatment of the natives, or only cases of injury?

Mr. CHURCHILL: I am informed that they cover such cases completely. If the hon. Gentleman will read them he will be able to judge if that is so.

Delagoa Agreement.

Mr. WHITEHEAD (Essex, S.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Delagoa agreement gives Germany the reversion of the Portuguese Colonies in East and West Africa, or whether any agreement to a similar effect is in existence; and, if so, whether it has received the adhesion of Great Britain.

Mr. CHURCHILL (for Sir Edward Grey): My right hon. friend is unable to give any further information on the subject beyond what has already been given by his predecessors in reply to similar Questions.

Slave Labour in San Thomè and Principe.

Sir C. HILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can state the result of the representations which are understood to have been made by the Foreign Office to the Portuguese Government on the subject of slave labour on the cocoa plantations of San Thomé and Principe.

Mr. CHURCHILL (for Sir Edward Grey): We learn from the Portuguese Government that fresh regulations are being drawn up, placing the recruitment of labourers for the plantations entirely and permanently under the control of Portuguese officials. Due provision is also to be made for repatriation. An official in whom complete confidence is placed by the Portuguese Government is to proceed to Angola shortly in order to superintend the inauguration of the new system.

Licensing Duties.

Mr. BARNARD (Kidderminster): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can give the number of pre-1869 beer-house licences that were in existence at the passing of the 1904

Licensing Act; how much has been contributed by the owners of these houses to the compensation fund in the financial years of 1905, 1906, and 1907; how many of them have been suppressed during these years; how much money has been collected from the trade under Goschen's Act; will he state the purposes to which Mr. Goschen originally intended to apply that money; and how much has the war tax of 1s. per barrel on beer and 6d. on spirits yielded since the termination of the war.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.): 1. The numbers of ante-1869 beer-houses have never been ascertained with certainty; but it is believed that out of the total number of 31,942 beer-houses in existence on 1st January, 1905, *i.e.*, when the Licensing Act, 1904, came into operation, the ante-1869 beer-houses numbered 28,000 and upwards. 2. Owing to the absence of exact records, it is not possible to say how much has been contributed by the owners of ante-1869 beer-houses to the compensation fund. 3. The number of ante-1869 beer-houses extinguished with compensation in the years 1905, 1906, and 1907 is believed to be 1,673. This number is exclusive of the ante-1869 beer houses (believed to number 277) which have come to an end without compensation for various causes in the same three years. 4. The total sum derived from the additional duties on beer and spirits imposed by the Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1890, (to which, presumably, my hon. friend refers) up to 31st March, 1907, amounted to £21,087,970. 5. It appears from the Budget Statement of 17th April, 1890, that the original intention of the Government was to devote about one-quarter of the proceeds of these additional duties to the "purchase of licences," and the remainder to various local purposes. (*See Hansard* Vol. 343, Column 734). 6. The estimated yield of the additional 1s. per barrel on beer and 6d. per gallon on spirits from the termination of the war up to 31st March last amounted to £8,557,000 and £4,152,000 respectively.

MR. CHARLES ROBERTS (Lincoln): Is it not the fact that about 900 houses were given up in the three years before the Act of 1904 came into existence, and has not the yield of taxation from the trade been practically stationary as compared with what it was before the war, while the burden of other taxation has increased by £30,000,000 sterling?

MR. ASQUITH: I must ask for notice of the Question.

Income Tax.

MR. YOUNGER (Ayr Burghs): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he is demanding payment of Income Tax in England at the present time with the same rigour as it is being enforced in Scotland.

MR. ASQUITH: At the present time, the procedure is identical on both sides of the Tweed—equivalent notices demanding payment within ten days having gone out about the last week in January alike in Scotland and in England and Wales.

MR. YOUNGER: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that distraint notices were issued in Scotland last week?

MR. ASQUITH asked for notice of the Question.

MR. FELL: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if a large number of income taxpayers will be deprived of the benefit of the reduction of the tax to 9d., to which they are entitled, owing to the fact that they delayed or neglected to send in their claims within the period limited; if complaints have been made on this account; and if, having regard to the increase of income tax from other sources which has been already received, he can see his way still to allow the abatement to those who pay the tax during the present month.

MR. ASQUITH: I would refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to a Question by the hon. Member for East Tipperary which is printed with last Thursday's Votes. For the reasons therein explained, I fear it is not possible to extend the very considerable concessions which have already been made.

Small Holdings Schemes.

MR. HICKS BEACH (Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer when a Treasury Minute will be issued giving an undertaking that, in the event of the Small

Holdings Commissioners carrying out a scheme where the county council have declined to do so for fear of incurring a loss, and such scheme does result in a loss, the whole of such loss shall be borne by the Treasury.

MR. ASQUITH: A Treasury Minute dated 31st December, 1907, stating the conditions under one-half of any loss incurred by a local authority in carrying out a scheme under the Act would be paid from public funds, was communicated to county councils and county boroughs by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries on the 25th ultimo, and was also sent to the Press. No undertaking was ever given that, where a loss is entailed by action of the Commissioners in default of a council, the whole of that loss should be borne by the Treasury. The Act empowers the Treasury in such cases to pay the whole or any part of such loss, but each case must be considered on its merits and in relation to the surrounding circumstances.

Boy Offenders.

MR. WEDGWOOD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will say for what offences, and by what courts, the four boys under twelve referred to on page 13 of the Report of the Commissioners of Prisons for 1906 were imprisoned; and what terms of imprisonment were actually served by them.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): No. 1 was convicted at Kettering Police Court of stealing apples and sentenced to seven days imprisonment, which he served. He had been previously convicted. Nos. 2 and 3 were convicted at Lindsey (Lincolnshire) Petty Sessions of larceny of eggs after a previous conviction, and were ordered to be sent to a reformatory school for three years, and to be detained in prison until a reformatory school could be found to receive them. They were in prison for ten days. No. 4 was committed from Ashby-de-la-Zouch Petty Sessions for three days for stealing growing apples, and was discharged in ordinary course on the morning of the third day. Though his age was given at the prison as just under twelve, it is now stated that he was over that age.

MR. WEDGWOOD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will direct that any boy under fourteen years of age who is committed to prison shall be detained in a female prison or on the female side of a prison.

MR. GLADSTONE: The treatment of boys under fourteen in prison is governed by Special Rules (Nos. 258 to 274 of the Rules for the government of Local Prisons) which provide for considerable modifications of ordinary prison arrangements and mitigations of prison discipline in their case. The question will be further dealt with in the Children's Bill, which is to be introduced this afternoon.

Crimes in Lincolnshire.

MR. MOONEY (Newry): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he is aware that during the year 1905 there were reported to the police 1,218 indictable crimes in the county of Lincoln, including two attempts to murder, one threat or conspiracy to murder, two cases of manslaughter, twelve cases of malicious wounding, two cases of unnatural offences, one case of indecency with males, two cases of rape, nine cases of indecent assault on females, ten cases of defilement of girls under sixteen, seven cases of larceny of horses and cattle, fourteen cases of arson, three cases of killing and maiming of cattle; if he can now state when the figures for 1906 will be available; if he can state how many of these crimes were committed in the Stamford division of the county; and if he can now state whether there is any diminution of these classes of crime in this county or in the parishes comprising the Stamford division of the county.

MR. GLADSTONE: The figures given by the hon. Member correspond closely with those in the Criminal Statistics for 1905. The figures for 1906 will be available in two or three weeks. They show a slight diminution in some of the classes of crime specified. I have no information as to how many of the crimes were committed in the Stamford Division.

MR. MOONEY: How is it the right hon. Gentleman can get the latest possible figures for Ireland and not for

England? Is the Irish Office a branch of the Home Office?

MR. GLADSTONE said there was a time when the Irish Office was practically under the Home Office. He wished the calendar of crime in England were as light as it was in Ireland.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): Will the right hon. Gentleman send a copy of his Answer as to the appalling state of affairs in Lincolnshire to the hon. Member for the Stamford Division, who is so much interested in crime in the county of Clare.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.) asked the right hon. Gentleman if his attention had been called to the fact that in the Stamford Division in 1905 thirty-eight persons committed suicide in a state of insanity, and whether, as the electors there had given other evidence of insanity, he would communicate with the Commissioners of Lunacy in order to have this serious matter attended to.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N): Would it not be well for the country if an equal number of persons in Clare committed suicide?

Shop Thefts.

MR. BOTTOMLEY (Hackney, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether he will grant a Return showing the number of charges of stealing from shops which came before the police courts during the year 1907, with the description given in each case of the occupation or social position of the person charged, together with the result of the proceedings.

MR. GLADSTONE: To collect the information necessary for this Return would involve a vast amount of labour on the part of the police and justices' clerks throughout the country; and the value of the information does not appear to me to be sufficient to justify this.

Postage on Prisoners' Letters.

MR. BOTTOMLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether he is aware that in certain of His Majesty's prisons persons awaiting trial, and who have had their money taken from them, are not permitted to purchase the postage stamps they require for communicating with their friends, and that such letters are consequently sent unstamped, involving the payment of double postage by the recipients; whether such practice is general in His Majesty's prisons; and whether he will take the necessary steps to remedy it without delay.

MR. GLADSTONE: My hon. friend appears to be under a misapprehension. It is the rule in all prisons that prisoners awaiting trial who have money in the prison's books, are allowed to pay the postage of their letters from such funds.

Limerick Competitions.

MR. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether his attention has been called to the amount of Limerick competitions that take place in certain newspapers; and whether, having regard to the quasi-gambling nature of the competitions, he will be prepared to initiate legislation to deal with this question.

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes, Sir; my attention has been drawn to a number of these competitions. I am aware that both the character of the competitions themselves, and the manner in which the awards are said to be made, have aroused considerable dissatisfaction. It would be better if the energies of the public could be diverted into a healthier channel, but I cannot at present give any pledge to introduce legislation to deal with the matter. The question is, however, under the consideration of the Attorney-General and myself.

Conviction by Penzance Magistrates.

MR. EDWARD DUNN (Cornwall, Camborne): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if his attention has been called to the fact that two lads, charged with sleeping out, were sentenced on Monday last to one month's hard labour by the Penzance justices; and, if the sentence and crime be as stated, he will order their immediate release.

MR. GLADSTONE: My attention had not previously been called to the case;

but I have made inquiries and find that the prisoners referred to, who are eighteen and nineteen years of age, respectively, have been sentenced as stated in the Question. I find that both prisoners had been previously convicted, and that the justices in dealing with the case took into consideration the characters of the prisoners, their refusal to work, and their circumstances generally, and were guided in the sentence passed by the recommendations of the inter-Departmental Committee on Vagrancy (pars. 189–92), who strongly advised that to sentence tramps to very short terms of imprisonment was worse than useless. In the circumstances, I regret that I do not feel myself justified in advising His Majesty to interfere with the sentence imposed by the justices.

South Devon Farmers and Trial by Jury.

CAPTAIN MORRISON-BELL (Devon, Ashburton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to a petition received by the Members of Parliament for Devonshire constituencies passed by the South Devon Farmers' Association, showing that, whilst they approve of the general principle of trial by jury, they strongly condemn the present system whereby it becomes possible for one juryman to be called four times in succession, when others are not called once in forty years; and whether he will take action in this matter, either by legislation or otherwise.

MR. GLADSTONE: I have not seen the petition which the hon. Member mentions, but complaints with regard to the summoning of jurors reach my Department from time to time; and in October last I issued a circular to the Under Sheriffs calling their attention to the matter. From the replies which I received to that circular it appears that most Under Sheriffs fully realise the hardship involved in summoning a man to serve on a jury too frequently, and do their best to prevent such hardships. Where cases such as are mentioned in the Question occur, they should be brought to the notice of the Under Sheriff. I have no authority to take any further action in the matter, and I fear that I cannot make any promise as to legislation.

Cost of Excluding Aliens.

MR. BYLES (Salford, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, having regard to the fact that it is costing the country nearly £1,000 a month to exclude sixty or seventy foreigners who desire to land on our shores, and that experience has shown that the working of the Aliens Act brings such meagre and incommensurate results, obtained by administration which necessarily causes irritation and annoyance, the Government will now recommend that the Act be repealed or modified.

MR. GLADSTONE: My hon. friend must remember that the results of the Act are not to be measured only by the small number of aliens turned back at the English ports, but also by the number of those aliens who pass through as transmigrants instead of remaining in England, and of those alien criminals who are sent out of the country, the cost of whose expulsion is included in the figures I gave last Wednesday in answer to my hon. friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets.

Imports of Cane and Beet Sugar.

MR. FELL (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade what were the respective quantities and values of cane and beet sugar imported into this country for consumption in the past year?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): I am unable to give the precise information asked for by the hon. Member, as no distinction is made between sugar refined from raw cane and raw beet respectively when entered for consumption from British refineries. The total imports of raw sugar were however divided as follows:—Cane sugar 5,488,020 cwts. valued at £2,782,395; Beet sugar 9,443,822 cwts. valued at £4,541,797. The total imports of refined sugar (practically the whole of which are derived from beet growing countries) amounted to 19,721,426 cwts. valued at £11,819,033.

Prices of Wheat.

MR. REMNANT (Finsbury, Holborn): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade what were the average prices of wheat in France and Germany for each of the months of the year 1907, and also at Liverpool and on Mark Lane for the same periods.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The information asked for by the hon. Member, as far as it can be given, will be printed in the Votes.

MR. REMNANT: I beg so ask the President of the Board of Trade, if he will the give prices of wheat, as nearly as possible of the same quality, in London, Liverpool, Paris, and Berlin, on the 31st January, 1908, or thereabouts.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The following are the prices quoted on the 29th January, for representative qualities of wheat in the markets referred to. It is impossible, however, to say how far the various qualities of wheat mentioned are properly comparable.

	Per Imperial Quarter of 480 lbs.
	s. d. s. d.
London (Mark Lane): English, Good to fine Reds (delivered) -	35 9 to 36 2
Liverpool: United States, No. 2 Red Winter - -	36 2 to 37 5

The prices of representative Canadian and Australian Wheats on the Liverpool market are considerably higher.

Paris: Wheat, Good - -	39 8 to 40 11
Berlin: Home Grown - -	46 6 to 47 9

The New Patent Act.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, whether he can inform the House as to the extent to which the new Patent Act has led to arrangements for the manufacture of patented articles in this country which were formerly made abroad.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: It is, of course, too early at present for me to gauge the full extent to which the Act has already led to the making of the arrangements indicated by the hon. Member: but I am satisfied from the information which I have received from a variety of sources, that the Act has already had a great effect in bringing home to patentees, who have hitherto been working their patents exclusively abroad, the necessity of establishing works in this country for carrying on their inventions in order to protect their patents from revocation or infringement, and I have every reason to believe that before the end of August next, when the section relating to this question will come into force, the effect of the Act in this respect will have been very considerable.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: Does the right hon. Gentleman know of any definite cases where foreign firms have already made arrangements by the purchase of land, and so on?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Oh, yes, I know several cases.

Hong Kong Mail Contract.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston): I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether he is aware that the Hong Kong mail contract which was temporarily renewed after a debate in this House on March 27th last, will shortly expire; whether it is proposed to make a new contract for the same service; and, if so, whether he can assure the House that, in accordance with the principle laid down by himself in the course of that debate, care will be taken that an absolute equivalent is received for the money spent.

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): The contract with the Canadian Pacific Railway Company for the conveyance of mails to Canada and the Far East expires April 6th. The question of its renewal for a limited period and under certain conditions has been raised by the Canadian Government, and is now under consideration. Any proposal for the renewal of the contract will necessarily be submitted to the House.

New Zealand Mail Service.

MR. FELL: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if any progress has been made in the re-establishment of the mail service with New Zealand via the Pacific.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: The United States Post Office arranged in August last for a four-weekly mail service between San Francisco and Auckland. Mails from the United Kingdom for New Zealand are regularly sent by this route on every fourth Saturday.

Post Office Wages.

MR. BARKER (Penryn and Falmouth): I beg to ask the Postmaster General, when he proposes to take the Post Office Supplementary Estimate, under which provision is made for carrying out the recommendations of the Parliamentary Committee on Post Office Wages.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: There is no intention of taking the Supplementary Estimate to which my hon. friend refers until I have published the revision of wages and conditions of service founded on the recommendations of the Parliamentary Committee, and until time has been given for the consideration of the revision. If the House desires to discuss the report of the committee and matters arising out of it, it would be able to do so on the Supplementary Estimate with due notice given. The revision will, I hope, be issued within a day or two. As I have already stated, the delay in publication will not adversely affect the remuneration of any officer, as all improvements in pay will date back to January 1st. I may add that, for various reasons, the publication of the revision has been delayed, as I was anxious to make it as complete as possible before publication. As it is, the classification of offices will be necessarily very incomplete, as the Board of Trade inquiries into the cost of living are not yet finished.

Postage Parcel Excess Charges in Limerick.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he is aware that a Post Office regulation has recently been made charging three pence on every postage parcel which the postman on his beat in the district of Drumcollogher, in the county of Limerick, failed to deliver owing to the absence of addressee; if he can say whether this regulation is a general one or confined merely to this district; and whether, owing to its unfairness, he will take steps to have it removed.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: The charge referred to by the hon. Member was made under a misapprehension, and I have given instructions for it to be discontinued.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: Will the money paid be refunded?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: If the hon. Member will consult me privately I will see if it can be done.

Medical Inspection of Schools—Speech of the Chairman of the Staffordshire Education Committee.

MR. WEDGWOOD: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether his attention has been called to the speech of the chairman of the Staffordshire Education Committee in which he states that the efficiency or otherwise with which the local authorities put into operation the medical inspection of school children will be a determining factor in the annual grant given by the Board of Education; whether this is generally known by all local education authorities; and whether the Board will circularise authorities, stating at the same time that they consider the appointment of whole-time doctors, as in Staffordshire, to be the surest way of securing this efficiency.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): The Board have stated in Section 10 of the Memorandum on Medical Inspection, which has been issued to all local education authorities, that the effectiveness of the minimum inspection required under the Act will in future be one of the elements to be considered in determining the efficiency of each school as a grant-aided school. The appointment of whole-time medical officers will no doubt be advisable in the larger and more populous districts, but in view of the differences in area and population among the various local education authorities who are charged with the duties of inspection, I do not think an expression of opinion, such as my hon. friend suggests, could be made of universal or even of general application. The Board will always be happy to give advice to any authority who desires to consult them, but the detailed arrangements and personnel required will be matters in the first instance for the consideration of the authority in the light of local circumstances and existing public health organisation.

Cost of Medical Inspection.

MR. MACKARNESS: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he has considered the additional expense likely to be thrown upon the local authorities by carrying out the medical inspection of children under Section 13 of the Education (Administrative Provisions) Act, 1907; and whether it is proposed to give them any relief from the Imperial Fxchequer.

MR. McKENNA: The financial arrangements in connection with the forthcoming Education Bill will include an additional grant in aid of the expenses of local education authorities under Part III of the Act.

Oxford Street School, Swansea.

MR. LYTTELTON (St. George's Hanover Square): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether after the 1st April 1907, the managers of the Oxford Street voluntary school at Swansea paid the teachers in that school the difference between the lower salaries authorised by the local authority to be paid to them and the higher salaries recommended by his colleague and predecessor; and whether the local authority have refunded to the managers the amount of such difference.

MR. McKENNA: The right hon. Gentleman, if he were more familiar with the details of this tangled controversy, would be aware that the item of salaries was only one of the questions in dispute. Pending the settlement of the more important questions, this matter has been deferred, as the managers were aware, for on 5th November they wrote to the Board:—"The managers do not, of course, abandon their claim for the full amount they have paid the teachers, and reserve this matter to be dealt with in subsequent correspondence." I may say, however, that the Board are now communicating with the local education authority.

MR. LYTTELTON asked the right hon. Gentleman whether, as the information which he gave to the House appeared to be neither complete nor accurate, he would reconsider the question and take some steps to refund to the managers the money they had paid in respect of salaries of which his predecessor approved.

MR. McKENNA: The information on which the right hon. Gentleman bases his supplementary question is inaccurate, but the statement to the House is both full and accurate.

MR. LYTTELTON: Is it the fact that local managers have paid out of their own pockets the difference between the salaries authorised by the local education authority and the salaries sanctioned by his predecessor? Is that the fact or not?

MR. McKENNA: My predecessor never sanctioned payment of any salaries at a higher rate.

MR. LYTTELTON: I refer to the salaries, the withholding of which the right hon. Gentleman's predecessor declared to be "unjust to the teachers and gravely imperilling the efficiency of the school."

MR. McKENNA: The right hon. Gentleman is not familiar with this controversy. If he were, he would know that, with regard to the salary of any individual teacher, upon which alone the Board could adjudicate, no question has been brought before the Board. I must have a question on each individual salary brought before me before I can determine whether it is or is not sufficient. There is no general standard of salary throughout the country.

LORD ROBERT CECIL (Marylebone E.) asked if it was not the fact that in April last year the managers paid to the teachers the difference between the salaries they were to be paid and the salaries being paid to teachers in a similar position in the county schools; and, further, if the payment was made because the National Union of Teachers called out the teachers from the Oxford-street school because they were not receiving what they regarded as a sufficient and proper wage for the services they were rendering.

MR. McKENNA believed it to be the fact that in some cases the managers did pay higher salaries than they were refunded by the local education authority. But that was not the question. (A voice, "Yes, it is.") He was not aware what the reasons were, but he thought they were somewhat different from those stated.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Is it in order to refer to speeches delivered in former debates and base a Question on them? I have often been called to order before.

[No Answer was returned.]

Wales and the Secondary Schools Regulations.

Mr. EVELYN CECIL (Aston Manor): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education how many local education authorities in Wales have expressed their approval of the financial provisions under the new Secondary School Regulations.

Mr. McKENNA: I have no detailed information on the subject, but as far as my experience of local education authorities goes, an increase of grant is not ordinarily considered by them to be adequate.

Mall Electric Lights.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT: On behalf of the hon. Member for Mid Armagh, I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works when the new electric light standards will be erected in the Mall.

The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. Harcourt, Lancashire, Rossendale): The casting of these standards is now going on, and it is hoped that those required to light the space around the Queen Victoria Memorial will be completed and fixed before July. The standards for the Mall will follow in due course; but I cannot fix any date at present; bronze founding is a lengthy process and occupies much longer than iron founding.

Press Dining-Room.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT: On behalf of the hon. Member for Mid. Armagh, I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works when the dining-room used by members of the Press will be ready for their occupation; and what has been the cause of the delay in its preparation.

Mr. J. MACVEAGH: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that this Question is repudiated by the Press Gallery Committee, and that the members of the Gallery have no complaint to make of the present temporary arrangement?

Mr. HARCOURT: Yes, I am aware of the fact stated in the supplementary Question. The dining-room is now ready for occupation. During the short delay other accommodation was provided for the Press from whom I have received many expressions of gratitude for the improvements recently effected.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT: May I remark that there is no such insinuation in the Question as suggested by the hon. Member?

Marble Arch Improvement.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT: On behalf of the hon. Member for Mid. Armagh, I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works if his Department is incurring any outlay upon works now being executed at the Marble Arch; and, if so, when it is probable that the Supplementary Estimate will be presented.

Mr. HARCOURT: My Department is incurring some outlay for the remaking of roads within the Park; all other works which are being undertaken at the Marble Arch are to be paid for by the London County Council. There are funds available on the Vote for the payments for labour which are likely to be incurred during the present financial year; and it will not therefore be necessary to present a Supplementary Estimate.

Workmen's Compensation Government Contract.

Mr. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he is aware that in some cases contractors have omitted to insure their workmen under the impression that when men are engaged upon work for the Government there is no need for such insurance; and, if so, what steps he proposes to take.

Mr. HARCOURT: It has been reported to me that some such misapprehension exists; I need hardly say that it is wholly unfounded. Under the Workmen's Compensation Act the liability of employers whose workmen are engaged on work for the Government is precisely the same as that of any other employer.

Official Advertisements.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield Central): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if instructions have been given to the Government Departments that official advertisements are to be withheld from Conservative and Unionist newspapers with large circulations and given to Radical newspapers with small circulations; and, in such case, if full particulars will be laid upon the Table of all such subventions.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. WHITELEY, Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey): The Answer is in the negative.

Army and Navy Pensions.

SIR CLEMENT HILL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, whether he can state the number of soldiers and sailors who are affected by the decision of His Majesty's Government not to allow such persons to count their service for continuous pension under The Superannuation Act, 1859.

MR. HERBERT LEWIS (Flintshire): My hon. friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury—who is absent on account of illness—asks me to say he has no information on this subject.

Small Holdings.

MR. GEORGE ROBERTS (Norwich): I beg to ask the honourable Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether, when a local authority purchases land for small holdings, it is intended that the rent to be paid by the tenant to the local authority shall be fixed so as to cover the repayment of the purchase money borrowed by the local authority, as well as the interest on that purchase money; and whether, having regard to the fact that, under The Small Holdings and Allotments Act, 1907, tenents engage for the use and not the purchase of land, the Board will issue a circular instructing local authorities that rents should be fixed to cover the interest on purchase money, and not the repayment of purchase money.

THE TREASURER OF THE HOUSEHOLD (Sir E. STRACHEY, Somerset, S.): The intention was as indicated in the first part of the Question of my hon. friend. It was considered that in view of the fact that the repayment of money borrowed for the purchase of land might extend over a period of eighty years, the additional rent which would be chargeable to the small holder would be but small, and not more than a reasonable equivalent for the advantages accruing to him by the use of the powers and credit of a public authority. The question is not however free from difficulty, and we are in communication with the Local Government Board and some of the county councils concerned respecting it. Perhaps my hon. friend will communicate further with me on the subject at a later stage.

Foot and Mouth Disease in Scotland.

MR. MCCRAE (Edinburgh, E.) asked the hon. Member for South Somerset if he had any further information to give the House with regard to the outbreak of foot and mouth disease in Midlothian.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY said that no further suspected cases of foot and mouth disease had been reported since Saturday last. The slaughter of the diseased herd had been carried out, and the carcases buried in trenches in the ground set aside for the purpose by the corporation of Edinburgh, who had throughout rendered the greatest assistance. The order of scheduling the district had been so far relaxed as to allow animals from outside the scheduled area to be moved by rail to Edinburgh, Musselburgh, and Leith, and from the railway station to a slaughterhouse.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory) asked for information as to the origin of the outbreak.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY replied that suspicion for the outbreak of the disease rested on hay imported from Rotterdam. The matter was being further investigated.

Illegal Trawling in the Moray Firth.

CAPTAIN WARING (Banffshire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland how many cases of illegal trawling in the Moray Firth were reported to the

Fishery Board during the months of December and January last; and whether cases of British trawlers flying a foreign flag were reported.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): Sixteen trawlers were detected on forty-four different occasions in the Moray Firth in December and January. Some of these are understood to be owned or managed by persons or companies having their places of business at a British port.

Uig Cottars' Grievances.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that 330 crofters and cottars in the parish of Uig, Island of Lewis, Rosshire, have called the attention of the Government to the fact that more than one third of the inhabitants of the townships in which they reside are cottars or squatters without land, and point out that crofts of a greater rental than £5 yearly would aggravate the evil; and, seeing that they urge that a clause should either be inserted in the Small Landholders (Scotland) Bill, or a separate measure passed, whereby available land may be divided into small lots in those districts in which squatters at present constitute a burden, will he state what action he proposes to take in the matter.

MR. SINCLAIR: I am aware that a petition to the above effect has been presented to the House of Commons. Powers are taken in the Small Landholders (Scotland) Bill which are designed to increase the number of small holdings of any size up to the limits contained in the Bill and to make these available to suitable tenants. That Bill has already been presented to the House of Commons this session and will shortly be proceeded with.

House-Letting in Scotland.

MR. BARNES (Glasgow, Blackfriars): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he is in a position to state when he will introduce legislation giving effect to the recommendations of the Committee which reported last year on the subject of house-letting in Scotland.

MR. SINCLAIR: Not at present. The report is now under consideration.

Irish Land Act Finance.

MR. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he can state what is now the annual amount of the Sinking Fund created for the purposes of The Irish Land Act, 1903; in what securities this money is being invested, and what is the profit arising from such investment; and whether profit so arising is placed to the credit of the Irish Land Act Finance Fund or is paid direct to the Treasury and used by the Treasury for purposes other than financing the Irish Land Act of 1903.

MR. ASQUITH: The Sinking Fund receipts of the Irish Land Purchase Fund in the current financial year are estimated to amount to £101,000. The Sinking Fund portion of the Purchase Annuities is not invested in securities, but is applied in making further purchase advances, in accordance with Section 36 (2) of the Irish Land Act, 1903. The effect of this application is to reduce the amount of Stock which would otherwise have to be created to provide for advances, and thereby to reduce the charge for Excess Stock upon the Guarantee Fund. By this mode of application the Sinking Fund accumulates at a fixed rate of 2¾ per cent. per annum. No profit is made over and above the 2¾ per cent., but the Guarantee Fund is saved from a loss which would fall upon it if the Sinking Fund moneys were applied in any other way.

MR. HAYDEN: Has this been the practice since the commencement of operations under the Act.

MR. ASQUITH: I think so. I will inquire.

Irish Sorters' Grievances.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he will say whether he now considers the advisability of giving the sorter, Mr. D. Feeheny, a second trial in the clerical department, General Post Office, seeing that the work of the particular duty, on which he was disqualified at the money order department, has since been found to be excessive, and six hours extra duty per week allowed for it.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: The case of the officer to whom the hon. Member refers has been carefully considered on two separate occasions. As I informed the hon. Member in July last by letter, I am satisfied that Mr. Feeheny has had a fair trial in the money order department. Every allowance was made for inexperience, but he was found unsuitable for clerical work. In these circumstances I see no sufficient reason for giving him a further trial.

The Law of Entail.

MR. MORTON: I beg to ask the Prime Minister, if he will consider the necessity of promoting legislation at an early date to abolish the law of entail in this country.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): This is a very large and important subject. Perhaps my hon. friend would repeat his Question when the measures named in the King's Speech (or most of them) have passed into law.

MR MORTON: Will my right hon. friend give me an indication when these measures will be passed?

The following Question and Answer were omitted from the *Debates* for Monday, Feb. 10th:—

Grants-in-Aid to Crown Colonies.

MR. WEDGWOOD: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury with reference to the grants in aid made to certain Crown Colonies, whether, in view of the gradual progress towards financial solvency of most of those Colonies, notably Uganda and certain of the West Coast Colonies, and in view of the now achieved prosperity of others, notably in Asia, he will arrange that all future grants in aid are in the nature of loans, so that the British Treasury may ultimately recover capital and interest.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. RUNCIMAN, Dewsbury): No, Sir; I cannot undertake to do this. I have given the matter careful consideration from time to time, and each case is and must be dealt with on its merits.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London) asked what business was to be taken on Wednesday and Thursday. He also asked whether the Government could name a day for a discussion on the Anglo-Russian Agreement.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I should like, in the first place, to express, on behalf of the whole House, the satisfaction with which we greet the right hon. Gentleman's return. As to the Anglo-Russian Agreement, probably a truncated day, such as we sometimes have at disposal at this period of the session, would suffice. I will endeavour to discover what would be the most convenient day. As to the business of the week, to-morrow the Supplementary Estimates will be taken again. On Wednesday I propose to move the Resolution allocating the time for the consideration of the two Scottish Bills. On Thursday that debate will be continued, if Wednesday does not suffice, as I should hope it would, and then, if time permits, the report of the Supplementary Estimates will be taken.

NEW MEMBERS SWORN.

Samuel Thomas Evans, esquire, K.C., His Majesty's Solicitor-General, for County of Glamorgan (Mid Division).

Edward Alfred Goulding, esquire, Parliamentary Borough of Worcester.

STANDING ORDERS.

Ordered, That the Select Committee on Standing Orders do consist of Thirteen Members:—Sir John Brunner, Sir Frederick Cawley, Mr. Ellis, Sir Thomas Esmonde, Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland, Sir Joseph Leese, Colonel Long, Mr. Mildmay, Mr. William Redmond, Mr. Shackleton, Mr. James Stuart, Mr. David Alfred Thomas, and Mr. Eugene Wason were accordingly nominated Members of the Select Committee.—(*Mr. Ellis.*)

NEW BILLS.

DAIRIES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To regulate Dairies, and ensure the purity of milk supplies in Scotland," presented by Mr. Gulland; supported by Sir John Tuke, Mr. Cleland, Mr. M'Callum, Mr. Findlay, Mr. Sutherland, Mr. Barnes, Mr. M'Crae, Mr. Younger, Mr. Menzies, Mr. Wilkie, and Mr. Esslemont; to be read a second time upon Friday, 21st February, and to be printed. [Bill 60.]

SEA FISHERIES REGULATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To provide for the suppression of illegal fishing by trawl vessels," presented by Mr. Morton; supported by Mr. Weir, Mr. Smeaton, Mr. Lamont, Mr. Cathcart Wason, Mr. John Hope, and Mr. Ramsay Macdonald; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 18th February, and to be printed. [Bill 61.]

RAILWAY TICKETS BILL.

"To prevent a time limit being set upon the use of passenger tickets," presented by Mr. Morton; supported by Mr. Rowlands, Mr. Ernest Lamb, Mr. Weir, Mr. John Hope, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, and Sir Howard Vincent, to be read a second time upon Tuesday 18th February, and to be printed. [Bill 62.]

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY COUNCILS) BILL.

"To make further provision with respect to the arrangement of Polling Districts for the election of County Councillors," presented by Mr. Acland Allen; supported by Mr. Guinness; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 63.]

DIVORCE LAW AMENDMENT BILL.

"To enable the wives of persons sentenced to long terms of imprisonment, or of persons certified to be incurably insane, to annul their marriages," presented by Mr. Bottomley; to be read a second time upon Friday, 28th February, and to be printed. [Bill 64.]

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION BILL.

"To amend The Workmen's Compensation Act, 1906," presented by Mr. Hyde; supported by Major Dunne, Mr. Cecil Harmsworth, Dr. Hazel, Mr. Harold Pearson, Mr. Thomas Frederick Richards, and Mr. Stewart-Smith; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 18th February, and to be printed. [Bill 65.]

COMMONS BILL.

"To amend the Inclosure Acts, 1845 to 1899, and the Law relating to Commons," presented by Sir John Brunner; to be read a second time upon Friday, 29th May, and to be printed. [Bill 66.]

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

"To prohibit the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday," presented by Mr. Perks; supported by Sir George White, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. John Wilson, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Mr. Nicholls, and Mr. Maclean; to be read a second time upon Friday, 8th May, and to be printed. [Bill 67.]

PAYMENT OF JURORS BILL.

"To provide for the Payment of the expenses of Jurors attending assizes and quarter sessions," presented by Mr. Lloyd Morgan; supported by Mr. Abel Thomas, Mr. Hay Morgan, Mr. Mackarness, Mr. Bertram, Mr. Herbert, and Mr. Partington; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 10th March, and to be printed. [Bill 68.]

CHILDREN BILL.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL, Yorkshire, Cleveland) in asking leave to bring in a Bill "to consolidate and amend the law relating to the protection of children and young persons, reformatory and industrial schools, and juvenile offenders, and otherwise to amend the law with respect to children and young persons," said: This is the first reading of a Bill to which we can give no narrower title than that of "Children Bill." The present law for the protection of children and the treatment of juvenile offenders is in some confusion. It is spread over a large number of statutes, and it urgently needs consolidation. Experience has shown the need of a considerable number of amendments and extensions of the law. The Government have decided not to introduce a series of small Bills in successive years, but to ask Parliament to enact, in one large and comprehensive measure, a thorough codification, and amendment of the law relating to children. A Bill of this scope could not, in a crowded session like this, expect to pass into law unless it commanded, more or less, the favour of all sections in the House, and we have, therefore, excluded from it all the subjects which might properly be described as controversial. Even the question of children in publichouses, with regard to which there is a general measure of assent, we have thought it wiser to defer to be dealt with in the Licensing Bill. The question of the employment of children, whether in factories or elsewhere, raises important industrial questions on which, unhappily, there is not complete agreement. The question of education naturally belongs to the Education Acts, and there are other subjects which we might have liked to include but which we have been obliged to omit. But, even with these omissions, the Bill is a somewhat voluminous one. It contains 119 clauses, covers seventy pages, and consolidates twenty-two statutes and parts of many others, together with a number of new provisions. For the convenience of the House, and of the public who are interested, I have had prepared a White Paper, which will show clearly, clause by clause, the effect of this Bill on existing legislation, and which will be circulated at the same time as the Bill. The Bill extends to the whole of the United Kingdom. Through all its parts uniform definitions run. A child is a person under the age of fourteen years; a young person is a person above the age of fourteen and under the age of sixteen. The first part of the Bill embodies the Infant Life Protection Act, 1897, which was passed to stop the evils of baby farming and for the protection of the lives of infants put out to nurse. That Act has been found in practice ineffective in many respects. There are many holes through which evil-disposed persons may escape its control, but, by a series of detailed amendments we stop those holes and strengthen the control of the Act. One disputed point in connection with this measure we have left, for the moment, an open question. The Act of 1897 exempted from inspection those persons who received one nurse-child, and not more than one, in consideration, not of a lump sum, but of periodical payments. Since the passage of the Act there has been a keen controversy among those who are best entitled to speak as to whether this class of home should be included in the Act or not. I have no time now to enter into the merits of that dispute but we shall ask the House to appoint a Select Committee on this point which will hear evidence and report, and whose conclusions, I trust and expect, will be received in time to enable them to be embodied in the Bill at its later stages. The second part of the Bill re-enacts the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act, 1894, with a large number of amendments mainly designed to strengthen the law and to facilitate the action of those societies which are doing such admirable work in the three kingdoms for the prevention of cruelty to children. I will mention only two of the chief provisions proposed in this part of the Bill. Every year some 1,600 infants meet their deaths from overlying, a waste of infant life which should easily be preventible and which ought not to be allowed to continue. We propose, in such cases, since the offence is not one of wilful cruelty, but of negligence, to make the penalty a light one, except where drunkenness can be proved. An equal number of children are killed year by year from burns and scalds owing to their being left in rooms with unguarded fires. We impose in such cases, also, a similar penalty, except where it can be shown that reasonable precautions were taken. The proposals of the third part of the Bill deal with an evil, growing in extent, most deleterious to child life, and for which public opinion almost universally demands a remedy. I refer to the evil of juvenile smoking. The Committee on Physical Deterioration recommended a legislative remedy, and a Committee of the House of Lords, appointed in 1906 specially to examine this question, after hearing much medical and other evidence, made a unanimous and a very emphatic recommendation in the same sense. Many countries throughout the world have already legislated on this subject. We propose to prohibit the sale of cigarettes and cigarette paper to children under the age of sixteen, to prohibit persons under the age of sixteen from smoking in streets and public places, and to make them liable for the first offence to no more than a reprimand, but for subsequent offences to a light fine. We also allow, and this will probably prove a more effective provision, the police and other authorised persons to confiscate the tobacco which is being used by those little boys who are found smoking in streets and public places. We have a provision also for dealing with such automatic machines for the sale of cigarettes as are found to be extensively used by juveniles. The fourth part of the Bill consolidates the nineteen Statutes which now contain the law relating to reformatory and industrial schools. The changes we propose are too many and too minute to deal with now, but I would like to mention that it has been suggested that the age for committal to a reformatory should be raised above the present figure of sixteen, and to explain that we are not adopting that suggestion only because we consider that it is inadvisable to mix older offenders with smaller boys and girls, and because my right hon. friend the Home Secretary hopes to introduce a Bill establishing a new class of reformatories for these older offenders. There are in the Bill a number of miscellaneous clauses, of which I will only mention two. From time to time cases of cruelty and neglect are discovered in so-called homes for children which are fraudulent institutions, conducted by persons who live on the charitable contributions which are intended for the destitute children whom they have collected. There is no right of entry under the present law to such institutions, and the Bill provides that, where a home is kept for destitute children and is supported by charitable contributions, there shall be a right of entry for persons authorised by the Secretary of State. Regard will be had in the selection of such persons to the religious denomination by which such homes are being maintained. The other clause is one designed to solve the difficult and long-standing problem of the vagrant child. There are some hundreds of children, who are now continually taken about the country, deprived of any opportunity of schooling, educated only in vagabondage, and denied many of the most elementary benefits of a civilised life. We propose a clause which, we hope, will stop that once and for all. We adapt the machinery of the Compulsory Education Acts, which are at present found to be inapplicable to these cases, to meet the requirements of the vagrant child. The last part of the Bill, which has to do with juvenile offenders, is based upon three main principles. The first is that the child offender ought to be kept separate from the adult criminal, and should receive at the hands of the law a treatment differentiated to suit his special needs—that the courts should be agencies for the rescue as well as the punishment of children. We require the establishment throughout the country of juvenile courts—that is to say, children's cases shall be heard in a court held in a separate room or at a separare time from the courts which are held for adult cases, and that the public who are not concerned in the cases shall be excluded from admission. In London we propose to appoint by administrative action a special children's magistrate to visit in turn a circuit of courts. Further, we require police authorities throughout the whole of the country to establish places of detention to which children shall be committed on arrest, if they are not bailed, and on remand or commitment for trial, instead of being committed to prison. A great many towns have already provided places of detention, and we require that this practice should be made universal. We anticipate that a Treasury grant will be made for the maintenance of children, in places of detention, on remand. The second principle on which this Bill is based is that the parent of the child offender must be made to feel more responsible for the wrong-doing of his child. He cannot be allowed to neglect the upbringing of his children, and having committed the grave offence of throwing on society a child criminal, wash his hands of the consequences and escape scot free. We require the attendance in Court of the parent in all cases where the child is charged, where there is no valid reason to the contrary, and we considerably enlarge the powers, already conferred upon the magistrates by the Youthful Offenders Act of 1901, to require the parent where it is just to do so, to pay the fines inflicted for the offence which his child has committed. The third principle which we had in view in framing this part of the Bill is that the commitment of children in the common gaols, no matter what the offence may be that is committed, is an unsuitable penalty to impose. The child is made to feel for the rest of his life that he is regarded as a criminal and belongs to the criminal classes, and at the same time that vague dread of the unknown penalties of imprisonment, which is one of the most powerful deterrents of crime, becomes useless and nugatory. After consultation with many of the chief judicial and legal authorities of the country, the Government has come to the conclusion that the time has now arrived when Parliament can be asked to abolish the imprisonment of children altogether, and we extend this proposal to the age of sixteen, with a few carefully defined and necessary exceptions. Many methods will still be left in the hands of the courts for dealing with delinquent children, but where none of the ordinary methods are suitable, our Bill will permit the committal of the child for a short period, under Home Office rules and a proper system of classification, to the places of detention which have to be provided for remand cases. Such committals we anticipate will be exceedingly few, and a similar Treasury grant will be paid in respect of them. It has not been easy to explain in the ten or fifteen minutes which the rule allows a Bill of so wide a scope as this, but I trust I have been able to say enough to bespeak for the Bill the favourable consideration of the House.

Motion made, and Question, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to consolidate and amend the Law relating to the protection of Children and Young Persons, reformatory and industrial schools, and juvenile offenders and otherwise to amend the Law with respect to Children and Young Persons,"—put, and agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Herbert Samuel and Mr. Secretary Gladstone.

CHILDREN BILL.

"To consolidate and amend the Law relating to the protection of Children and Young Persons, reformatory and industrial schools, and juvenile offenders, and otherwise to amend the Law with respect to Children and Young Persons," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, and to be printed. [Bill 69.]

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid.) and, subsequently, Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

ARMY (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATE, 1907–8.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): I should like on this occasion to have made some statement to the House of the progress that has been made with the carrying out of the plans which Parliament sanctioned last session, but if I were to attempt anything of the sort you, Sir, would apply the strict rules which govern occasions such as this, and which confine the speaker to the subject matter of the Supplementary Estimates and the Votes concerned, and I shall bear these rules in mind. The purpose of the Supplementary Estimate may be expressed very shortly. Last session Parliament sanctioned the plan of giving an organisation to the Volunteer and Yeomanry force so as to make it a territorial or citizen force, organised in brigades and divisions, with staffs in a fashion that it had not been before. For the purpose of that organisation it was necessary that some of the existing units should be disbanded, and in all cases transformed into units of a different character—fewer battalions, but of a larger strength and with a more perfect organisation. And it is proposed that that organisation should be carried out as rapidly as possible, and it has been arranged that it should take place within this financial year, because it was, obviously, to the general convenience to prevent two systems of finance running in the same year. For that purpose it is necessary to disband the existing corps and to convert them into corps of a different order under a different Statute, and that operation is to take place by 31st March. One of the defects of the old Volunteer Force was that it had no proper financial arrangement. The colonels of the battalions were practically responsible for the whole of the finance. They contracted the debt and the result was that it was hardly possible for anyone who was not a rich man to be an officer of a Volunteer corps. Of the very essence of the scheme there was this, that the administration of its finances should be placed in the hands of County Associations who should take the burden of administering the money and administer it in respect of a smaller number of units and deal with them not separately but together. It was hoped in that way not only to get financial control but to get greater economy, and that was the scheme which was sanctioned last session. For that purpose it was essential that in disbanding the old corps or in converting them into the new organisation we should relieve them of the load of debt which hung round their necks. That is not so formidable an operation from the financial point of view as it seems, for the whole of the money with which these debts were paid used to be provided by Parliament, and all we propose to do is to take the new method of finance whereby the means which Parliament places at present at the disposal of the Volunteer corps should be put at the disposal of the County Associations so as to meet the requirements in a different fashion, but with the same results. Therefore, in asking Parliament to pay off these debts, I am not asking Parliament to take up any burden of a new order. Under the old system the money would have had to be raised all the same, only it would have been raised in a different form, but it is necessary in order to give the new system a start to clear off the debts of these corps so that under the new arrangements the Associations may not have to apply money or to ask Parliament for money for paying off old debts. Last year I moved a Supplementary Estimate in respect of the mortagages which affected Volunteer and Yeomanry property, and that Estimate incurred a certain amount of criticism. I did not agree with the criticism, though I appreciated the point of it, which was that instead of applying the money which had been saved to the mortgages it would have gone in the natural course into the new financial year. Whether that criticism is good or bad—and I doubt whether the hon. Members for the City and I will ever agree upon that—I have not to discuss now, because I think I can show the Committee that strictly and absolutely what we are doing now belongs to the present financial year. It must be remembered that this comes under the decision which Parliament has already given of having to be wound up by 31st March this year. They have to be cleared of their debts, therefore the debts are strictly payable within the financial year. Indeed, they are debts which are due and in the ordinary course ought to have been paid within the year, but by the old practice would have been continued until the next year if the corps had gone on. But as the corps are not going on it is obviously only an act of justice as well as a convenient course to discharge the debts within the year to which they belong, and, therefore, I am taking the only course I could take in asking for a Supplementary Estimate. It would not have been right to put money on the Estimates of next year, even if I could have done it, which belongs to a past state of things.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.): Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say the old Volunteer companies would have been bound to pay off these debts within this financial year?

MR. HALDANE: No. The old Volunteer companies were always in debt. They used to put off the payment of their obligation and Parliament furnished them in the next year with money to discharge their bank balances and pay their bills. But as the old corps are coming to an end, and the colonels who are personally responsible in many of these cases will cease to be colonels of these corps, it is only right that the matter should be wound up, and the corps freed from the debts before they are disbanded. Therefore, it comes strictly into the financial year, and I do not see that even the greatest financial purists would have any objection to the process. It is quite a different case even from last year. Now I come to the mode in which this is to be done. During the year the policy of the Government has been a policy of the strictest economy and of the observance of the obligations of frugality. As we have gone on we have found a certain number of economies possible with efficiency, and the result of that is, I am glad to say, that I have not to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer to give me any money out of his general surplus, but we have been able to save on the Army Estimates last year enough to make this operation financially possible without adding a penny to the old Estimates. That is always a satisfactory state of things. I do not think we could have estimated for less. We brought down the Estimates more than £2,000,000 last year, and I thought it was as close as I could get; but in working along a number of small items were found on which by prudent and careful administration it has been possible to effect economies. I will give the Committee an example. I do not want to go into the matter in detail though I will answer questions fully. We found a great number of lawsuits and claims which had been brought against the War Office in connection with the war. They had gone dragging on their course, as lawsuits sometimes do, and, perhaps because I have had more experience of lawsuits than the average War Secretary, I dislike them particularly. Consequently a very searching examination was made. If I may say so metaphorically, I doffed my cocked hat and resumed my full-bottomed wig, and the result was that, with the assistance of the Solicitor to the Treasury, a number of these things were brought to an end, a considerable saving being effected. Then in the course of last year we have been able to go into a number of matters very carefully. For instance, in North China there used to be kept an Indian battalion as well as half a British battalion. With the consent of the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, the War Office determined to substitute one complete British battalion for the half battalion and the Indian battalion. Consequently something has been saved on the cost of transport. These savings make up a sum sufficient to meet this Supplementary Estimate.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN asked how much the modifications amounted to.

MR. HALDANE: The plan put forward last year for forming a reserve of officers has been worked out and is ready to be put in operation. As a matter of fact, I doubt whether I have spent a penny of the £50,000 I took last year for this purpose. When one comes to investigate a new conception closely, one finds a number of points in which it can be improved, and it is only a few weeks ago that the plan became a complete one. Then there is the Army Reserve. Last year when I moved the Estimates, I made the proposition that Section A., which consists of Regulars, should be brought up to 13,000 from 5,000. That would have meant a very large sum, and it was found that some of the services for which the increase was wanted were services not of an exclusively military character, such as transport, medical, and ammunition column services, and the result was that before the Territorial and Reserve Forces Act passed through Parliament, we had a Committee which, with the General Staff, made a considerable modification, which will be found in Section 32 of the Act of last session. Under that modification only 6,000 men are raised as Regulars, and 4,000 are taken from the Special Reserve. They had good hope they would get the 6,000, but from the experience of the last few months we have not much hope of getting more. We have somewhat relaxed the conditions enabling men to enter. We have taken the period of two years since leaving the colours, instead of one year, and we hope to get the 6,000. We, therefore, obtained 4,000 more from the Special Reserve, which is a very much less expensive way of raising them. Then there is also a small sum of £8,000 for the expenditure of the County Associations up to 31st March, when the new system comes into operation. The Associations will be furnished with money for their establishments, but before 31st March they have a very serious piece of work to do, and that is the conversion of the force. Consequently, we have given them the money they have asked for—an allowance for secretary, clerical work, and so on, for which we have taken £8,000 on the Supplementary Estimate, which is covered by the figure we are asking the House to authorise us to take out of our savings. The only other observation I have to made in conclusion is this. Hon. Members may say: "Why did you not put this sum in your Estimates last year?" That is a very legitimate question, and there is an equally legitimate answer. I could not do so. The Estimates were brought in in February, and the new Act passed on 2nd August. Many modifications were made in the plan, some by agreement between the two Front Benches; and the result was that the scheme emerged from the House a good deal changed, and, I think, a good deal improved by the very satisfactory discussion which took place across the floor of the House. It was, however, impossible to tell at the time the Estimates were brought in whether the plan would go through. But now there are Associations in every county in England and Scotland. They were doing their business most satisfactorily and with great credit to themselves, and I do not think the House will grudge the very small sum which it is necessary to provide for their expenses if they are to discharge their duties properly in connection with the conversion which will take place between now and 31st March.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £100, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1908, for additional Expenditure in respect of the following Army Services, viz.—

Vote 5. Volunteer Corps, Pay, Allowances, etc.:—

	£
E. (*a*) Grants for the Extinction of Debts - - - -	350,000
E. (*b*) Expenses of County Associations - - - -	8,000
	358,000
Less Surpluses on other Votes -	357,900
	100

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH (Derbyshire, W.): Upon this occasion the right hon. Gentleman has been able to base his reasons for asking the Committee to vote a considerable addition to the Army Estimates on rather different grounds from those he gave last year. I should like to remind the Committee of what actually did occur in connection with this transaction of relieving officers of the debts upon their corps and drill halls. Last year the Committee in a revised Supplementary Estimate was asked to vote £435,000, and we were mainly induced to do that on the plea put forward by the right hon. Gentleman that he was contemplating great changes in our military organisation, to carry out which it was necessary to place the Territorial Army on a more satisfactory basis, and to relieve them of many of these obligations which were pressing so heavily upon them. We said then, as we say now, that the policy of taking over these debts which pressed upon individual corps was one for which there was much to be said. Personally I believe Parliament was right in relieving those gentlemen and those corps of those responsibilities, but what we protest against is the method by which this transfer has been carried out. Last year we asked what was the urgency of carrying out that change in the way the Government adopted, namely, by the money which ought to have gone to the redemption of debt under the old sinking fund. No doubt the right hon. Gentleman will say that this money will eventually go to the reduction of debt, but I wish to impress upon him that the more regular course to have taken would have been to make it form part of the scheme of the reorganisation of the armed forces of this country. I now come to what happened last year. The right hon. Gentleman passed a Bill of very considerable magnitude, which had far-reaching effects. It must be perfectly obvious that it will be a long time before the Act will be actually in operation, but there were various changes to be carried out immediately after its passage. We have a right to say that when the Act was being discussed, provision ought to have been made for immediately carrying out some of its purposes, and at any rate, we should not now in the form of a Supplementary Estimate be asked to vote money which ought to have gone to the reduction of debt, for the purpose of carrying out matters which must have been clearly foreseen, and in regard to which it was perfectly obvious a very considerable sum would have to be spent to carry the Act into effect. I do not wish to make too many references to previous debates in connection with Supplementary Estimates, but I do wish to point out that, however good a policy may be in itself, the method of proceeding to deal with it by Supplementary Estimates is one to which we ought to offer a very stern opposition. I have had a fairly long connection with the Public Accounts Committee, and I know that there has never been any change in the opinion of that Committee as to the undesirability of these Supplementary Estimates. I should like to quote a few sentences from a speech made by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster upon Supplementary Estimates in general.

> "The great value of the debate was, however, the eliciting from all parts of the House objections to the unsatisfactory state of those Supplementary Estimates . . . . Mr. Gladstone looked upon a Supplementary Estimate as almost a crime on the part of the department which presented it, and it was no easy task to get over his objections . . . . The value which he attached to the debate was that it directed attention to the financial unsoundness, the tendency to extravagance, and the diminution of the control of the House of Commons which this growing practice of Supplementary Estimates involved."

I believe that on that occasion the Supplementary Estimates were a good deal connected with the war. I think every word said by the right hon. Gentleman on the broad general principle are even more applicable now. Practically a new policy is being introduced. Great changes in the Auxiliary forces are being carried out by the unsatisfactory methods of Supplementary Estimates. More than that, there is no urgency in bringing the subject before the notice of the House. I think we want stronger reasons for not allowing money to go to the old sinking fund, and if such reasons are not given we ought to resist any proposal which the Government make for the purpose of diverting this sum of money from the object for which it was originally voted by the House of Commons. I have no doubt that if we could get any general assurance that this practice is likely to stop the House would for the present be satisfied. In the last two years the right hon. Gentleman has assumed the rather melancholy role of a gentleman known in Ireland as the "gombeen man"—whatever benevolent objects he may have ultimately in view in the buying up of other people's debts and the fag end of other people's mortgages. I do not know how long the right hon. Gentleman is going to proceed on that line. I hope that the practice followed for the last two years will now cease. However desirable it may be to relieve people from the obligations they have incurred, I hope they will be dealt with when the Estimates for the year are presented and not as now, when practically the House of Commons loses all control and has no means of preventing the money from being voted. I do not know whether I am entitled to ask questions as to what has been done under the reorganisation scheme. I am bound to say I have taken as active a part as I can in connection with the formation of the association in the county with which I am most closely associated, but looking to the voluminous and ample documents placed before the association I have had some difficulty in reconciling my duties as Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee with the duty of presiding over the County Association. I have endeavoured to reconcile the two positions although the bodies take rather antagonistic views. I should like to ask on what basis any allowances are now going to be made for the expenditure which the County Association is incurring up to 31st March. I can only mention that in the case of my own association we have not received any sum of money which we are able to deal with in carrying on the necessary and I am afraid rather expensive work which we have hitherto been told to do. We have been confronted with the further difficulty that we do not know on what basis we are to proceed. We have been told that for certain purposes under the Finance Memorandum we were to get the sum of £1,845. These purposes practically include administrative charges. I cannot take this sum as absolutely final. To meet the services already arranged for the charges on the basis of the average of the last four years would require the sum of £2,984. Being in that position it is a little difficult to see how we are to meet the charges with the sum of £1,845. In the three regiments with which I am principally dealing, namely, one regiment of Yeomanry and two regiments of Volunteers, every care has been taken to keep the charges as low as possible. One of the difficulties we have experienced is that we do not see how it is possible to reduce to any considerable extent, on the information we now have, our present expenditure of £2,984. There is a further difficulty in this connection. I presume it is on the authority of the Army Council that the County Association has been told that not more than 10 per cent. of the £1,845 could be devoted to the salaries and expenses of the secretariat, exclusive of the rent of offices and buildings. I do not know on what information the Army Council framed these regulations, and I shall await with the greatest interest to know how it would be possible in a large and rather inaccessible county like Derbyshire adequately to carry out the intentions of Parliament if the whole of the offices are to be run for £184 10s. a year. We may be able in the light of further information—I hope we shall—to effect such reductions as will enable us to do it, but I would point out that in Derbyshire we have a very representative association of hard-working gentlemen, and no scheme could have a better chance of success; but unless those who have willingly given a great deal of their time and trouble are adequately supplied by money contributions all their zeal will vanish, and it will be impossible to carry out the scheme in a satisfactory manner. Last year many hon. Members thought that the reorganisation scheme was bound to be excessively expensive, and I am afraid that those prophecies are becoming true. So far as Derbyshire is concerned I see no difficulties in carrying out the requirements of the Army Council. I do not wish to make any rash promises, but I think if we get the right men we might be able to do even more if the Army Council thought it desirable. It is absolutely useless to attempt to carry on the scheme if we are going to be tied in monetary matters, unless we have local enthusiasm behind it, and unless we get proper backing from the Government. Owing to the regulations already issued we are unable to proceed with the very desirable object of at once appointing a secretariat. We have only £184 10s. a year for that purpose and we do not know how far we would be justified in getting a gentleman to undertake the work on what really amounts to an uneconomic wage. If you expect the services of a competent man you should give adequate remuneration. We would like more information on this subject. However desirable and proper the policy of the Government may be, we have every justification in saying that the method by which the right hon. Gentleman is proceeding to obtain the money is one the House of Commons ought to view with the greatest care, and I might almost say with the greatest hesitation. These Estimates are not in the proper sense of the word Supplementary Estimates. They are really new Estimates.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.): It would be respectful to the Committee if I should say a word at this stage. On the first point raised by the right hon. Gentleman he was not only entitled, but was bound as a most efficient Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee and from the House of Commons' point of view, to take a very serious view of this question. I entirely agree with him in his two main propositions. In the first place, I consider that *prima facie* a Supplementary Estimate is an indication of bad finance. I lay that down as a broad general proposition subject to qualifications which I will state in a moment. I think the right hon. Gentleman will find that this year the Government have avoided Supplementary Estimates to an extent to which he will not easily find a parallel within Parliamentary memory. In the second place, I quite agree with him that a saving in the ordinary expenditure for the public service ought not to be diverted from the Old Sinking Fund. When a vote such as that now asked for violates these conditions, it is quite right that an explanation should be given. I speak from the point of view of the Treasury when I say that *prima facie* Supplementary Estimates are most objectionable to us and expose us to severe and relentless criticism, although the right hon. Gentleman will understand that we do not resent criticism. The ground on which we feel justified in withdrawing our opposition to a Supplementary Estimate on this occasion is two-fold. I said a moment ago that Supplementary Estimates are bad finance; but there are exceptions. One, if not the only, exception where a Supplementary Estimate is justifiable is where it is for a purpose which could not at all have been foreseen at the time when the original Estimate was made, or when owing to the development of unforeseen circumstances the Estimate has swollen to the present demand on the public expenditure. I think that even so strict an economist as the hon. Member for Norwood will admit that this Supplementary Estimate falls within that category. I think that on the whole it does. At the time when the Estimates were presented last year this scheme depended entirely upon its being embodied in legislation which required the approval of both Houses of Parliament. It was a widely complicated scheme involving very debatable points, and it was absolutely uncertain in what shape it would ultimately emerge—in particular in relation to the Militia and what were formerly called the Auxiliary Forces. At that time the scheme from a Parliamentary point of view was in a hypothetical condition; and I do not see how my right hon. friend could possibly at that stage have put down on paper a definite sum for the particular purpose we are now discussing. But my right hon. friend the Member for West Derbyshire says:—"Why not have done it later or when your scheme did take shape and when you began to feel sure it would take the form you anticipated and receive the assent of Parliament?" It was not till the month of August, I think the 2nd, that the Bill passed, and then it would have been impossible to say that a Supplementary Estimate could have been presented. In point of fact so far as Parliamentary control is concerned the situation is the same as if the Supplementary Estimate had been presented earlier in the financial year. In the second place, the money proposed is for the extinction of debt. These are debts the extinction of which you must admit is part of the bargain; and my right hon. friend has to meet them in the course of the present financial year. Therefore, the money is not going for a new service but for the extinction of capital liabilities which you are bound to discharge. Taking these two considerations together, I think a case has been made out, without relaxing the strictest rules of financial integrity, for this Supplementary Estimate. It does not involve any additional charge, but will enable my right hon. friend out of useful economies he has made on other Votes, to discharge those capital liabilities which for him was an obligation of honour.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.): The Chancellor of the Exchequer laid down at the opening of his speech the rules which in his opinion should govern the Treasury with regard to Supplementary Estimates, and I think that they are quite orthodox. But when the right hon. Gentleman applied the reasons to this particular Estimate he destroyed the value of the principle. If he extends the exception to cases of this kind, I think it would not be difficult to do so in any case when it suited his convenience. The Chancellor of the Exchequer says that *prima facie* all Supplementary Estimates are bad finance; and, in the second place, that savings ought not to be diverted from their proper course, viz., the Old Sinking Fund. He makes two exceptions. The first is where the expenditure cannot have been foreseen. That is an exception we all make, and no objection can be taken to it. But I cannot accept its application to the present Estimate. The Secretary of State for War is paying this year, or proposes to pay this year, a charge which would have ordinarily fallen upon the revenue of next year. That charge is one which the War Office, I will undertake to say, could have estimated not perhaps in pounds, shillings and pence, but certainly within a few thousands of pounds—I almost think within a few hundreds of pounds before we had gone over the year. But I go further. The right hon. Gentleman said that there would be difficulty not only in paying off the charge, but that it could not be paid until the Bill passed both Houses of Parliament. What is the difference between this expenditure and the expenditure which the Secretary of State for War asked us to pass last year as a Supplementary Estimate to the expenditure of the previous year? At that time he asked us to buy up the mortgages on all the Volunteer drill halls. He proposed to do that in preparation for his Army scheme, which was in fact the Army scheme subsequently embodied in his Bill. If it was necessary for him to wait for that Bill before he asked for this expenditure, how was it right for him to proceed with the other expenses for his Army scheme before the Bill was passed? It is quite obvious that this was an explanation invented quite after the fact, although I do not wish to use a phrase offensive to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. When last year the Secretary for War asked for £500,000 for cognate services dependent upon the passage of a Bill not then introduced, it is absurd to say that the right hon. Gentleman could not have presented an Estimate for this purpose quite early last session. I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer's exception does not apply to this particular case. I think it was quite possible to estimate this expenditure with sufficient accuracy before the passage of the Bill, because it is an expenditure which has been recurrent, going on year after year, and the War Office had only to look at what it had been doing over a series of years in order to frame a satisfactory Estimate of what the expenditure would be this last year. The Chancellor of the Exchequer thought to justify this Estimate on the ground that it went to the extinction of debt. The blessed word "debt" when used by the right hon. Gentleman and hon. Gentlemen opposite, either covers a multitude of sins or a multitude of meanings. If this money had not been intercepted by the Secretary for War, with the Chancellor of the Exchequer's permission, it would have gone directly to reduce the permanent capital liabilities of the State. What is the debt he is going to reduce now? It is a charge which would be a natural charge on the Estimates of next year. What the Chancellor of the Exchequer is doing is to divert merely from the payment of National Debt to lighten the charges on the revenue next year. It is that and nothing else. Of course there are all kinds of obligations which fall due next year. The contracts entered into this year for the feeding of the Army and those for coal supplies for the Navy would have to be met out of revenue next year, and the payment of interest on the War Loans. I feel quite as strongly with regard to Supplementary Estimates as the right hon. Gentleman, but if you press the doctrine that you are not to have Supplementary Estimates too far you would exaggerate the Estimates-in-Chief. If either the Treasury or the House of Commons make it too difficult for a Department to make an under-estimate you will always have an over-estimate. When a Department has over-estimated it is very reluctant to see money go to the Exchequer for the reduction of debt; and it may say "We should have a surplus for this purpose or the other." I therefore think that you may easily carry the protest against Supplementary Estimates too far. I am a little heterodox in my views on this subject, as judged by the standard of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and of the Public Accounts Committee. But still I think they ought to be watched and that the attempt to justify these Estimates on the ground put forward by the Chancellor of the Exchequer altogether fails. So much for the financial point of view. That leads me to another observation of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, which has a more serious bearing upon policy than the one on finance. The right hon. Gentleman said he was all the more ready to authorise the expenditure in these cases, because no fresh charge would be put upon the taxpayers, the Secretary of State for War having fortunately been able to make savings sufficient to meet the excess expenditure. Again, the words "savings" and "economies" are words which are used in two entirely distinct senses in this House. They have a technical sense, which means that you have not spent the money, and they have a general and popular sense which means that you did not need to spend the money; and the two things are quite different. When the Secretary of State says that he has been able to close down law proceedings and has made arrangements for more satisfactory terms than if the arbitration were allowed to go on, he has made a real saving; but when he says that he has been able to postpone the reserve of officers, or when he speaks of the altered position of Section A of the Army Reserve, these are not savings; they are failures to spend this year and involve at any rate as regards the first, an increased liability on future years.

MR. HALDANE: The system is only postponed.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: This is work which was to have been done this year, but has not been done, and the money which we voted to enable the right hon. Gentleman to provide the reserve of officers has not been spent, because no reserve of officers has been provided. But that is not an economy. The money is not spent; the service is not performed and as that service, by the confession of the right hon. Gentleman himself and by the common consent of every military critic, and of every one who took part in our Army debates last year, was one of the most important and most urgent questions before the Secretary of State, I can only express my deep regret that there has been this delay in carrying out his intention to establish a reserve.

MR. HALDANE: Only of five or six months.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Only of five or six months, but five or six months are five or six months, and the peculiarity of the right hon. Gentleman is that while he regards with perfect equanimity the delay of his construction projects, he permits of no delay in any of his work of destruction. As I say, in the opinion of every man interested in this question, there is no more urgent military problem than the increase of the number of officers whom we have, and instead of doing that, if my calculations are right, the right hon. Gentleman has failed to make even a beginning with that reserve of officers and has cut down the existing number of the Regular Army by over 300, the Militia by some 250, and the Volunteers by about seventy, I think, making in all a total of 634. There has been no economy there. We are worse off in that respect, as we have not done what the right hon. Gentleman intended to do, and we are worse off on this matter of military preparation than we were twelve months ago. Just one word on the similar question of Section A of the Army Reserve. I speak with some diffidence on this subject, because I am a child in these matters. I have done my best, however, during the discussions of last year and in other ways, while I was in office and since, to get some understanding of our military system as it was, as it will be when the right hon. Gentleman has carried out his work of construction, and as it is. I confess that it is a study which is perplexing to a layman; I do not readily master the technical language which is required to describe these forces properly, and I may be misunderstanding the facts; but as I understand the right hon. Gentleman he intended last year to have a force of 13,000 men of this Section A drawn from the Regular Army; men who had spent twelve years with the colours.

MR. HALDANE: Seven years with the colours and who would return to the service with the colours as Regulars.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: They would I understand be men who had spent seven years with the colours and who would return to service with the Regulars. Within nine months of developing that scheme to the House of Commons the right hon. Gentleman has come to the conclusion that it is impracticable and that he cannot get the number—that the prospects which he offered are not attractive enough, and that instead of being able to raise the number of such men from 5,000 to 13,000 as he had intended, the most that he can hope to get is 6,000. That is what I understand, and then he proposes to fill the place of the remaining 7,000 regulars whose services he cannot secure by 4,000 irregular troops. He described them as being on a militia basis, and I know what he means, troops without regular training. You would have thought that if he could not get the number of Regulars he wanted he would have said, "I must have three of the others in place of two, or five where I proposed to take three," because men who have not trained regularly will not be so valuable as men who have had seven years training. And here is the right hon. Gentleman's amazing proposal: because he cannot get 13,000 regulars we are to be content with 6,000 regulars and 4,000 other men who will not be regulars. That can only be described as a saving if the right hon. Gentleman is prepared to say not merely that he could not get his Regulars, but that he was totally wrong in asking for 13,000 men at all, and also that which he will scarcely say, that the 4,000 places which he is going to fill with men who have been trained on a militia basis will be as good as the Regulars. I do not think he will say that. He says, however, that the character of the work does not require such high training as Regulars receive, but I think everyone will admit that the better a man is trained the better the work will be done. At any rate, I do not call it an economy that the right hon. Gentleman should profess to give us 13,000 Regulars to come back to serve the country at any moment and then save the money by substituting 6,000 Regluars and 4,000 less well trained men for them. One further observation I have to make. I hope the Chancellor of the Exchequer will answer fully and in detail the question of my right hon. friend the Member for Derbyshire. I think there is a strong feeling on the part of most people who have been looking into this Territorial Army that it is going to be a much more costly affair than the right hon. Gentleman has yet admitted to the House. He began by producing an Estimate——

*THE CHAIRMAN: I am afraid I must interrupt the right hon. Gentleman. He seems to be discussing certain savings which appear here as Appropriations-in-Aid, but he cannot discuss the policy of these Appropriations-in-Aid on a Supplementary Estimate.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I have finished what I had to say on that point, Mr. Chairman, but on the point of order, may I ask whether we are not at liberty to discuss the argument which was put forward by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that as money is saved there is no objection to spending it on these purposes; would it be objectionable to say either that the money was not in fact saved or that it was inexpedient to save it?

*THE CHAIRMAN: The Chancellor of the Exchequer was perfectly in order in discussing whether the money saved on certain branches of the service could be spent on other branches of the service, but what cannot be discussed is the policy on which the savings are made. They are just the same as Appropriations-in-Aid, and they cannot be discussed in detail as a question of policy.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I will not say a word more on the subject, but what I was asking the Secretary of State was that he would deal fully in connection with these items with the expenses of the County Associations. Many of us think that the expenses have been very much under-estimated in regard to the Territorial Army in this and other respects, and the right hon. Gentleman will, of course, remember that he himself at a very early stage revised the original Estimate presented to the House and introduced a new and much larger one. We are only now beginning to see his scheme at work, and he pledged himself and the Government with the full approval of the House on all sides that there should be no "sending round the hat" in connection with the expenses of this new force, and that the legitimate expenses should be met by grants from the Exchequer. But we have heard on many sides of the narrow squeezing of the County Associations, especially in regard to the payment that may be made for their secretarial and other expenses. It is "sending round the hat" in spirit if not technically if you ask men to give their services for a remuneration which is below their value. You want to get as the secretary of a

County Association the very best man you can, an ex-officer with considerable experience in the Army. If you want men of that kind to give their time and attention to the business of the County Associations, it is absurd to offer them the small amount of remuneration which is stated to be the case in many cases. That is not begging from the county so much, but it is begging from the individual who, like many poor people who are not satisfied with their remuneration, would rather have that than nothing at all. There is a great deal of feeling in the country on the subject, and I hope the right hon. Gentleman will relieve the fears that are felt, and will give us the best estimate he can of what the expenses will be. I make this protest on this occasion, because I am as certain as I stand here that in future years this scheme of his, if it remains in force and if he is successful in getting the men and the army that he desires, will be a much more costly one than the House has yet been prepared for, and we ought to have from the right hon. Gentleman a full disclosure of the expenditure which is likely to be incurred, so that when he himself or his successors have to come to the House for that expenditure they may be able to justify themselves by a reference to our debates now, and may not be accused of swelling the Estimates, when in fact they are but endeavouring to meet obligations which the right hon. Gentleman has undertaken.

MR. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.) congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on the speech which he had made on his first appearance as a probable Secretary of State for War, although the first part of his speech was brought to a speedy termination by the intervention of the Chair. A great deal of the criticism of the right hon. Gentleman was based on a complete misapprehension as to what the Minister of War was going to do. It was not the fact as stated by the right hon. Gentleman that last year the Secretary of State for War had met all the capital liabilities of the Volunteers and that the expenditure now proposed to be met was really of a current nature. What his right hon. friend did last year was to meet the capital liabilities of the Volunteers so far as those due to the Public Works Loans Commissioners were concerned. The plea his right hon. friend then made was that if his Bill did not pass, and it had not then passed, what would happen would be that the Volunteers in the future, if they were retained, would be indebted to the War Office instead of the Public Works Loans Commissioners. His right hon. friend's proposal only dealt as it were with the indebtedness of the Volunteers to the Public Works Loans Commissioners. The right hon. Gentleman would admit that if we were to adopt a new policy with regard to the Territorial Army the County Associations which were to carry out the policy should start with a perfectly free hand and not be handicapped by the liabilities of their predecessors. Hitherto the liabilities of the Volunteers had been all vested really in the commanding officers. If the Volunteer Force was to take shape in the Territorial Army, then the State was bound to relieve the commanding officers not only of the expenditure for clothing to which they were at present committed, but also of these mortgage liabilities. In his own case his regiment purchased their headquarters. They did not borrow from the Public Works Loans Commissioners because he thought he could do better and borrowed elsewhere at a lower rate of interest. Although he was not one of those who would benefit, because in this particular case the regiment would be able to hand over £3,000 to their successors, so far as his regiment was concerned they had a mortgage on their headquarters from which they should be relieved. In his opinion the Secretary of State for War was doing a wise thing in asking the Committee for the money to wipe out all these liabilities before the new Territorial Army was formed. These debts were of two kinds: the mortgage debt and the charges incurred in respect of clothing which should have been met out of the capitation grants which would have been paid to the present Volunteers on 1st April. What the Secretary of State proposed to do was to wipe off all these liabilities which there could be no doubt the State was bound to meet, so that the County Associations could start with a free hand with the new force. He did not know that he quite agreed with the right hon. Gentleman with regard to the Supplementary Estimate, because he held rather strong views in that respect. But he thought that if ever there was a case in which a Supplementary Estimate was justified this was the case. If the new Territorial Army was to have any chance at all it ought to start under free and fair conditions, and if these charges were allowed to be transferred and made a charge on the new County Associations it would be very unfortunate. He had always taken a very strict view of any surplus being appropriated to matters which could have been foreseen and placed upon the Estimates, but if his right hon. friend had not taken this money out of his savings he would have been bound to have placed it on his Estimate next year, and the money would have had to be raised by taxation. [OPPOSITION cheers.] He quite appreciated that point, but having regard to all the facts of the case he thought his right hon. friend was perfectly justified in the course he had pursued. He had been much interested in the struggle which had taken place in the bosom of the right hon. Member for Derbyshire, as Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee and as chairman of one of the County Associations, and to see his desires as an economist give way to his desires for expenditure in his own district. There was no doubt a considerable feeling of difficulty in these County Associations in regard to the limited amount with which they had to meet the salaries of the secretaries and the working expenses. It was represented only to the extent of £8,000 in this Estimate, and that he had no doubt had been sufficient for what had been done in the interregnum. But he joined with his right hon. friend the Member for Derbyshire in saying that this was a matter for consideration. His right hon. friend had not done what he might have done under the power of *virement*, viz., made this transfer with the sanction of the Treasury without coming to this Committee. That dreadful word *virement* did not come into this question at all. His right hon. friend had done right when he came to the Committee for sanction for the transfer.

*COLONEL R. WILLIAMS (Dorsetshire, W.) expressed the opinion that it was a great pity that the right hon. Gentleman had misled—he did not use the term offensively—the country as to the cost which the Territorial Army would involve by asking for a Supplementary Vote of only £100. It would have been much better if the whole amount had been openly stated. Nor did he think that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was quite right as to the inability to ascertain the amount last year. So far as he was concerned he at all events could have told the right hon. Gentleman very nearly what would have been the cost last year if he had been asked. Neither did he think the hon. Member who spoke last was quite correct as to the mortgage debts, because the hon. Gentleman would see by the Vote that this was "for the extinction of debts other than those secured upon property." But he rose to ask the Secretary of State about two things—as to one of which he hoped it might be in order, as it affected the future of the Territorial Forces and therefore of the County Associations. He wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman if he would soon issue the conditions of the new force. He himself knew of whole districts where the condition of the Volunteer Force was at a standstill. Neither commanding officers nor men knew what was going to be done. The men were thinking and reasoning, and said they would not be caught in a four-years enlistment when they did not know under what conditions they were to serve, and they would not come to drill. If the right hon. Gentleman would issue the conditions of the new force he was sure he would get a good force if the men only knew the conditions under which they were serving. Another thing which he desired to reiterate was that it was impossible to run the secretariat on the sum proposed to be allowed. Four or five years hence when everything had settled down they might not want so much. His own county of Dorset was one with poor communication, and with a small and scattered population, and the secretary would have a great deal of travelling to do. They might very likely find an office in the county building, but with the small sum of £154 it was not possible that they would be able to carry on the organisation. The very lowest they could pay a secretary was £150—it ought to be £200—and that left £4 for the office and travelling expenses. He quite admitted that £8,000 seemed to be enough to pay the expenses of forty or fifty County Associations for two months, but if it was going to be based on any such calculations as at present existed it was impossible to start or carry on the Associations as they ought to be carried on, and it was not giving the Territorial Army a fair chance of success. The right hon. Gentleman would not find the counties take up the scheme as they ought unless he was able to fulfil his promise not in any way to starve the Territorial Army.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said he remembered no occasion in his experience of debates in Committee of Supply in which it was so difficult to say what was and what was not in order as in this debate. One or two subjects which he thought were certain to be mentioned had not been mentioned, and several had been mentioned which he would hardly have thought to be in order. The only practical rule one could follow was not the general and admirable principle laid down by the Chairman, because it did not give much help in this case, but to follow other speakers and deal with points which they had been allowed to deal with. He saw no other principle to follow, because it was very difficult to say, when they had the expenses of starting the County Associations in the Estimates, how far they might deal with them and their policy.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: If the right hon. Gentleman will allow me, this Vote is supplementary to the Votes of the current year, and it is the only mode we have in the present year of discussing the expense of the County Associations. We have always been allowed to discuss an item which appears for the first time.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE did not wish to strain the privileges of the House in Committee of Supply. He thought it was safer to confine oneself within very reasonable limits on occasions of this sort, because it would be opening the floodgates if they discussed the whole of the finance which they had discussed last year in this supplemental Vote. It would be somewhat trying the patience of the Committee, and they would have opportunities when they could fully discuss the finance. There was one matter which had not been dealt with which he mentioned first, though without any desire to deal with it. He mentioned it because he thought people outside the House would be surprised at certain words having been used by the Secretary of State, and at the matter not having been followed up in debate. The right hon. Gentleman had told them that one reason why the Vote was necessary was because regiments would have to be disbanded. He understood what the right hon. Gentleman meant. He did not think he invited them to debate the failure to take advantage of the willing services of persons in all parts of the country, or that they could debate on this occasion the getting rid of particular companies or battalions which did not fit in with the divisions of the scheme. But there was so much feeling on the subject outside the House that if it were in order they ought to discuss it. He thought, however, that the Secretary of State had used the word "disbanded" in a different sense—that the whole Volunteer Force had been disbanded, andthat a technical change had been made in the character of the force. They could not properly discuss on this Vote the getting rid by the War Office policy — not the policy of the Territorial Associations—of certain battalions and certain companies. Putting that matter aside, they had before them an anticipation of the Votes of next year, pure and simple. It charged on the Votes of the present year a sum which otherwise would come on the Votes next year. He was not a financial purist, he was not a member of the Public Accounts Committee, and he did not take the detailed interest in the matter that his hon. friend the Member for East Edinburgh did; but there was this to be borne in mind, that those who argued that this force would be infinitely more costly than the House of Commons believed or had been led to expect were in the position of having to point out that the Estimates of next year for this force were being relieved by this sum, and that an illusory reduction therefore on next year's Estimates was being made at the cost of the Estimates of the present year. As regarded the form in which it was done, the savings were also illusory. The War Office had always over-estimated on many items in order to have money in hand for certain purposes, and he imagined that on this occasion there was some doubt whether it would have been legal to deal with this sum by a mere *virement* by Treasury consent. Therefore, they came to Parliament for a Supplementary Estimate. But the fact that they always over-estimated on purpose had been demonstrated over and over again, and the Public Accounts Committee had had it before them every year. For, he thought, seven years under successive Governments money was taken in the Estimates for keeping up a force of mixed artillery in Lancashire which was never but a third of what it was supposed to be on the Estimates, with no attempt to raise the *cadres*. That led to a regular saving every year, and was taken with the knowledge that it would be a saving when the Vote was passed. These savings were illusory. It was rather difficult to keep a serious face when they found year by year these additions of two sums, one on one side of the account and the other on the other, coming to exactly the same figure within 6d. or within the imaginary £100, which was the sixpence of financiers. The original author of that kind of finance was Mr. Micawber, who showed that a small sum on a large total made the whole difference between affluence and beggary. This was very imaginary finance. Not being a member of the Public Accounts Committee, he treated it as a mere anticipation of next year's Estimates. It was simply taking so much of next year's Estimates and paying it now. Personally he had no objection to that course, provided the House of Commons thoroughly understood what it was doing. It had been stated by several speakers that the Estimates laid before them last year were a great under-statement as regarded cost, and that the force was likely to be exceedingly costly. The House would have to vote the money with a full sense of its responsibility, not only in the present but in the future, because the Secretary of State admitted that although he hoped to effect some small reductions on the Estimates of the coming financial year, there would be an increase year by year after the first small reduction. He did not propose to go over the whole ground to-night. He did not think it would be fair to do so. He merely uttered this warning note, that those of them who thought the figures of last year were under-stated had every reason to continue to think so, and believed that this was going to be an extremely costly force. In the last speech of the Secretary of State dealing with this question of finance, on Friday last, he said, "My friend, Mr. Buchanan, has provided us with the money." He wished it was their friend the Financial Secretary who had provided the money. He thought he would provide it with great care if left entirely to himself, and he would have great confidence in his judgment. But it was the House of Commons that had the responsibility of providing the money for which the Secretary of State asked. Last year the Financial Secretary in defending the Estimates told them that the Territorial Force in the future would be an improved force at a lesser cost, and that raised in a very sharp form the issue between them. Whatever illusory savings might be shown in the first year, when the system was in full work they were convinced, and they thought the country would come to know it, that the cost of the Territorial Force was not fully shown last year and would be a very great cost indeed, unless the force were starved to such an extent as not to exist at all except on paper. It had been said that the Secretary for War had led them to expect that the Territorial Force would be more costly than the corresponding force had been in the past. He had listened to every speech the right hon. Gentleman had made in the House of Commons, and he could not recall any occasion when that statement was made. The right hon. Gentleman's estimate was laid before them as the maximum estimate of the cost, and they were told that over and over again. The occasions when the

Secretary for War told the House that there would be great reductions were extremely numerous, and he made that assertion in the clearest terms on three or four occasions. He appealed to his hon. friends sitting on the Ministerial side to state whether it was not their impression that there was to be a saving of money upon the Territorial Force. That statement was repeatedly made and the contrary statement was one they could not find and for which they were not prepared. He was, however, content to rest his case upon the words of the Financial Secretary to the War Office who stated that the Government would obtain a better force at a lower cost. In a speech made at Manchester the Secretary for War led them to expect that there would be a trifling reduction on the force the first year, and that afterwards there would be a slight increase. Those who disputed the finance of this question last year were ultimately met by the argument that there would be a larger saving upon the Regular Army than any possible increase in the cost of the Territorial Army including the Militia, and as regarded the future that argument was beginning to be used again. But he would not now discuss that matter as it brought them face to face with the whole system upon which the Army was based. In conclusion he said that those who had looked most carefully into this finance were still under the impression that the country had been misled as to the cost of the Territorial Army, which, he thought, would prove in the end to be far more costly than they anticipated.

Mr. HALDANE said the speech of the right hon. Baronet was only the last of a series of speeches which he had made on this subject, in which he had attacked the plan which it had been his duty to place before Parliament. His consolation was that the attacks of the right hon. Gentleman were not confined to himself. No Secretary for War, or, indeed, no secretary for anything, had put forward plans which the right hon. Gentleman had not attacked. What they had been waiting for from him was something constructive, but they had waited in vain.

*Sir **CHARLES DILKE** said he offered a suggestion in the last debate they had —a scheme of General Miles.

Mr. HALDANE: Yes, the right hon. Gentleman had said he was in favour of a short-service army in addition to a long-service army—two armies. They knew what the expense of that was. As three-quarters of the right hon. Gentleman's speech was out of order, and only permitted by indulgence of the Chair, it was impossible for him to discuss the matter without having the Estimates for the year relating to this new force before Parliament. They would be before the House very shortly and that would be the time to deal with the question. All he asserted was that his task had been to produce a better army at a less cost, and when it was nearer completion he would leave it to the House to judge whether he had done so or not. In the meantime it was not, to say the least, fair to raise an issue which was wholly foreign to this debate, and for which there were no materials before the House to form a judgment. Assertion was not argument. The late Chancellor of the Exchequer raised the question as to whether they would not have done rightly in bringing this matter of the debts of Volunteers into the original Estimates last year. That was impossible for a very simple reason. In the discussions on this question it was not only an issue whether these debts should be paid, but when they should be paid. They were to be paid upon the disbandment of the corps under the old system and the creation of the new ones. But there was no certainty at the time when the Estimates were presented last year when that disbandment would take place. In the case of the Militia it was contemplated to treat them *pari passu* with the rest of the force, but it had to be postponed until after the next summer's training. A plea was also put in that the Volunteers and Yeomanry should be treated on the same footing, and therefore it was impossible to contemplate the present operations as falling within the present financial year. That was the conclusive reason why they could not possibly have taken the course suggested by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Worcestershire. Another point was raised by the Member for Derbyshire as to the allowances and expenses of the County Associations. What they had done they had based on an examination of a large number of cases. They might not be right, but their minds were not closed, and he would be very glad to hear from the right hon. Gentleman of any particular difficulties caused by the allowances suggested in the case of his own county.

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH said they sent up to ask how £1,845 was going to meet the expenditure of £2,984, and they had had no answer.

Mr. HALDANE said the answer depended upon their examination of the headquarters accounts of the battalion. They had occasionally found some very curious expenses put into headquarters accounts. There had been a committee on the subject of contributions for prizes, which laid down limits which were very seriously considered in this case ; it was the same with bands and the same with refreshments. Their minds, however, were not closed, and the matter was at this moment under consideration.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN : Has the right hon. Gentleman any idea as to what he intends to allow Associations to pay a secretary ? My right hon. friend was forbidden to spend more than 10 per cent. on certain things, including the salary of a secretary. That only works out at £180.

Mr. HALDANE said they had not limited the Associations strictly under heads, but had given them freedom. They said 10 per cent. was a proper amount to spend on certain things, but added the warning that, if they did run short of money, taking all things together, the War Office would be bound to comment upon their proceedings. Some counties did not require to spend anything like as much as others, and, therefore, they had been left a large latitude to work out their own finance. All the War Office wished to do was to get this matter put on a proper footing, and he was quite certain the House of Commons would not grudge anything to make the Territorial Force a good and efficient one, both on the administrative and on the combatant side. The late Chancellor of the Exchequer, speaking of Section A, had rather reproached him for not taking the whole of the men on the Regular basis, but he was not sure that for transport work —for work to be done by waggoners, farriers, and so on—the less trained man was not a more handy man than the Regular soldier who had been trained from the military point of view. Anyhow, it was very much more economical to get a force as far as they possibly can——

*The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the right hon. Gentleman was now going into a matter which was not raised by the Supplementary Estimate.

Mr. HALDANE said he would pass to another matter. One comment which had been made was that the reduction in the matter of paying off the debts of the Volunteer Force was illusory, because it would appear in future Estimates. Obviously that was not the case. They were paying off the debts of the Volunteer Force once and for all ; they would not appear in any future Estimates, and, therefore, if the reduction belonged to this year, and if it was right that it should be dealt with this year, there could be no hesitation about treating it in that fashion. He thought he had answered most of the points which had been put. If any other question should arise the Financial Secretary would deal with it.

Colonel KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport) said he would like to speak from the soldier's rather than the financier's point of view. He was very glad indeed that the Volunteer corps were to be handed over to the County Associations clear of debt, and if to attain that end it had been necessary to strain the practice with respect to Supplementary Estimates, he would not be inclined to blame the right hon. Gentleman. He understood the difficulties which the new County Associations would have to face, and it would be a great thing for them not to be burdened with the debts which at present rested on the Volunteer Force. From the Army point of view, he wished first of all to join issue with the right hon. Gentleman for having made the fatal mistake—it ran through all the Army policy—of thinking that any sort of man was as useful as a trained one.

*The CHAIRMAN : That is a question which I think it would be out of order to discuss at present.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY thought he was in order in following the course which had been hitherto followed in the debate. If he could not go into that matter, the right hon. Gentleman would be able to escape some of the criticisms which otherwise might have been offered. He hoped he would not be out of order in commenting on the expenditure of the secretariat, and the equipment of the County Associations. The right hon. Gentleman must by this time be aware of the very strong feeling throughout the County Associations in regard to the great difficulty which they had over the question as to how they were adequately to supply the salary of the secretary on whom the efficiency of organisation would depend. Pressure was being put on certain Associations not to take the best men available, but to take only soldiers who were drawing small pensions. He put it to the right hon. Gentleman that that could not make for efficiency. It was not fair to bring that pressure to bear. His duty to the Army was to say that this work must be done by absolutely efficient men. If the work was fairly and honourably worth such and such a salary, he should find that salary. He might base it on the number of corps to be maintained in a county, or on the number of thousands of men. He must have a basis for the calculation, and the remuneration for the work which the men had to perform must be reasonable. It might be, as the right hon. Gentleman said, that the intense stress of the work would be got over in the first four or five years, and it might be fair to say: "We will give so and so for the first four years, but we reserve the right to reduce it in future when there is less work to be done." He was encouraged to urge that point on the right hon. Gentleman by the words he himself had used. The right hon. Gentleman had said that he would see that there was a proper, just, and sufficient allowance. He thought the right hon. Gentleman would agree with him that it would be neither dignified nor right for the Department or the country to avail itself of the services of some poor officer whose pecuniary circumstances were such as to force him to take up the work on a salary which he knew to be inadequate. It was conceivable that the salary offered here and there might be £80 a year, and that a poor officer might be tempted to accept the appointment, knowing that he had no opportunity of earning anything in any other direction. Surely that was not the basis on which the salary should be paid. He pleaded with the right hon. Gentleman to establish a standard of the remuneration for the work which these men were to be asked to do. That was the only way in which the question could be adequately adjusted. To say that it was to be left to the counties and that these men were to get what was over when other expenses had been paid was not right. He did not ask extravagant salaries, but they should be adequate for the work to be done. If the right hon. Gentleman would do that, he would put an end to a great deal of trouble and difficulty in the County Associations. What was the use of saying that a County Association could get a secretary at 10 per cent. of the expenditure? It was impossible. Unless the right hon. Gentleman guided the County Associations in the direction of putting their forces in the hands of capable and experienced administrators whose interest it would be to keep the general expenditure down, he would find that he was pursuing an extravagant instead of an economical policy, and he would seriously disappoint those who were trying to work with him. He was pretty confident that after two years experience the right hon. Gentleman would find that the total expenditure on the Army would be greater than it would have been if the administration of the County Associations had been entrusted to capable and properly paid men. He further asked the right hon. Gentleman to lay it down primarily that he would not allow the Territorial Army to be founded on any private subscription basis whatever. The right hon. Gentleman knew that in many cases corps could not be maintained unless such and such privileges were provided for out of private purses. If the Territorial Army was to be a reliable Force for all the purposes which the right hon. Gentleman hoped it would fulfil, he should practically refuse to accept private money for any of the purposes which ought to be provided for out of public funds. These were points which were already beginning to corrupt the administration of the Territorial Army. [Cries of dissent.] The right hon. Gentleman would pardon him for saying so. The new Army should be clear of all suspicion of being paid for out of private pockets. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman that there was that danger, and it would be better to calculate on a fair basis the amount which the Treasury should pay, and that all private subscriptions should cease. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would see that those mistakes were nipped in good time to prevent mischief being done.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston) said that this form of finance was utterly indefensible, and he moved the reduction of the vote by £50. Nearly four years ago the whole of the hon. Members representing the Liberal Parly protested strongly by their votes and in almost every speech they made in the House against this kind of finance. He admitted that on that occasion the crime was a more serious one. [OPPOSITION cries of "No."] That represented the difference between the two Parties. They were then dealing with millions, now they were dealing with only a few hundreds of thousands. They were now asked to vote £100, but they were really voting £385,000 for the right hon. Gentleman's Territorial Army. His hon. friend the Member for East Edinburgh attempted to defend the vote by the use of a French word, meaning that it was not quite so bad as it appeared, but he did not think it prudent to disguise a vice by the use of a foreign term. In effect the transaction was a mis-application of public funds in order to relieve future estimates of the charge which ought to lie upon them. He agreed with the right hon. Member for East Worcestershire that money which had been obtained by economies on other Votes and ought to have been used towards paying off the National Debt was being intercepted to pay off a purely Army debt. The effect would be that the Army would appear to cost less in future years than it did actually cost, and that the public would not see it. The appropriation of economies should, in the course of strict finance, have gone to pay off the National debt. Next year the right hon. Gentleman could have done either of two things. First, he could have asked for a capital sum to pay off these Volunteer debts; or secondly, he could have fallen back on the example of the late Government and raised a national fund by loan and then charged the Estimates with the sinking fund. Either method would have been sound finance; but the right hon. Gentleman had done neither—he had paid off an Army debt, and the result would be that the Army Estimates would apparently be reduced. He went further. The right hon. Gentleman must have known that these Volunteer debts were in existence, and why did he not tell the House that the cost of the Territorial Army would be, because of them, so much more? Hon. Members opposite said that the new Territorial Army was going to cost more and more. Hon. Members on that side of the House not long ago were breathing fire and brimstone against the Government for increasing the Army expenditure, but he saw none of those Gentlemen present when there was before the Committee a definite question of preventing the Secretary for War misapplying money which ought to go to pay off debt in order to use it for purely Army purposes. He wished to point out in passing that the purpose for which the right hon. Gentleman was asking this money was to pay, not for a fighting force, but for a non-fighting force, because as long as the Navy kept the sea none of the members of that force would be used for fighting. He was one of those Members pledged to public economy in all departments of government; but he had not yet had the satisfaction of seeing that economy realised. Whilst it was important that economy should be carried out throughout all the branches of the public service, it was still more important to prevent extravagance being imposed upon the Committee by what was virtually a misapplication of funds. He begged to move.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £50, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Harold Cox.*)

SIR F. BANBURY (City of London) said that the hon. Member for East Edinburgh had endeavoured to defend the Secretary for War, but he unintentionally let the cat out of the bag when he admitted that this was practically voting something which ought to be made a charge upon next year's Estimates. One of the principal charges brought against the late Government was that they had failed to reduce the expenditure and the public Debt. When the Party opposite came into office they declared that they were going to reduce the Debt, and that they would not meet what ought to be current expenditure out of capital account. The action of the Secretary for War violated both those promises. The right hon. Gentleman was going to take money which ought to go to the reduction of the National Debt to pay off charges which ought to be voted as annual expenditure. The right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean did not allude to the way the money was to be found; he was not a financial purist; but there were many Members on that side of the House who did not go so far as the right hon. Gentleman when he accused the late Government of swelling the expenditure, but who still thought that the National Debt ought to be reduced. Therefore it was with great sorrow they saw the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War persisting in the error he began last year. It was quite true that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had laid down two very excellent maxims—that no Supplementary Estimate was right, and that money devoted to the Old Sinking Fund should not be diverted from that purpose. But then the right hon. Gentleman proceeded to say that this was an exceptional case, and that the money was going to pay off a debt due by the Volunteers. But this was a debt, he insisted, which ought to be paid off by the ordinary Estimates of the year. He was glad to see the right hon. the Member for Wolverhampton in his place. His speeches were always excellent, and any little knowledge he had of the rules of finance had been acquired from reading the speeches of the right hon. Member. On 22nd February, 1904, when dealing with Supplementary Estimates which arose out of the War, the right hon. Gentleman made a speech in which he said—

> "The great value of the debate was, however, the eliciting from all parts of the House objections to the unsatisfactory state of those Supplementary Estimates. There were two Leaders in this House who did a great deal to destroy that practice. They were Mr. W. H. Smith and Mr. Gladstone. Mr. Gladstone set his face like flint against it, and in his Cabinet too."

Had the right hon. Gentleman set his face like flint against this Supplementary Estimate?—

> "And no such remarks could have then been made as were made by the penultimate Chancellor of the Exchequer last year with reference to the support in the Cabinet of the Prime Minister. Mr. Gladstone looked on a Supplementary Estimate as almost a crime on the part of the Department which presented it, and it was no easy task to get over his objections."

And then the right hon. Gentleman went on to say—

> "They were all agreed that the Cabinet should put down its foot with regard to these Estimates."

He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to tell the Committee that he had carried out his excellent intention, because they all knew that he had the courage of his opinions. They also knew that there were rumours of dissensions in the Cabinet which arose from his setting his face like flint against Supplementary Estimates which did not arise from circumstances which could not have been foreseen. The hon. Member for East Edinburgh seemed lost in admiration of the policy of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in regard to ear-marking, but the hon. Member knew perfectly well that the Treasury would never sanction the transfer from one sub-head to another, unless there was the other sub-head to transfer it to. There was not this special sub-head last year, and therefore, when the breast of the hon. Gentleman was filled with admiration of the Chancellor of the Exchequer for his statement as to ear-marking, he must have known that he could not ear-mark the money.

MR. McCRAE said the last Government transferred an item of £10,000,000 from a sub-head to another sub-head which did not exist.

SIR F. BANBURY replied that the late Government might have done all sorts of things but that had nothing to do with the question, as two wrongs did not make a right, and his point was that the right hon. Gentleman could not have obtained the sanction of the Treasury, because the sub-head did not exist. But did the hon. Gentleman tell him that the late Government transferred an item of £10,000,000 from one sub-head to another which did not exist? If the hon. Gentleman told him that, he would admit that he was wrong. If not he should contend that he was right.

MR. McCRAE replied in the affirmative, and said that not only did the late Government do so but they did so without the consent of the House of Commons.

SIR F. BANBURY inquired if the hon. Gentleman would give him the instance he referred to.

MR. McCRAE said it occurred while the war was going on. The late Secretary of State for War, with the consent of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, spent £10,000,000 of money allocated to a particular purpose on a purpose for which it was not voted and which did not exist when it was voted, and by doing that avoided the necessity of calling Parliament back for an Autumn session.

SIR F. BANBURY said the hon. Gentleman had not met his point, because the item to which the £10,000,000 was transferred was in the Estimates.

MR. McCRAE said the item to which the £10,000,000 was transferred was the carrying on of the war, but the item for which the money was voted was for a different purpose altogether.

SIR F. BANBURY insisted that the hon. Gentleman had not answered his objection. They knew perfectly well that the Treasury did allow and it had been customary for Parliament to allow money saved on one item to be spent on another, with the consent of the Treasury. His point was that in this particular case the second item did not exist; it was not in the Estimates: whereas in the case to which the hon. Gentleman alluded, both items were in the Estimates and nothing irregular was done. He had endeavoured to show that the right hon. Gentleman had not taken to heart the lesson which they tried to give him last Session, but was again breaking all the traditions of sound finance and all the traditions upon which his Party were returned to power at the last election. He could quite see why this particular course was pursued. It was much easier to have a Supplementary Vote which would not be noticed in the country, than to increase the Estimates next year and have attention called to the matter. But whatever the reason for it might be, he did not think it was sound finance, and he should vote for the Amendment of his hon. friend the Member for Preston, who had the courage of his convictions and was consistent in what he said.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said the hon. Gentleman after swallowing a great many camels which were the property of his own Government was now distressed at swallowing this fly. He must say, however, that the arguments used lent a good deal of colour to the objection to pay money in this way, but he thought he could give reasons why it should be done. They all understood that Supplementary Estimates were bad things, and he quite agreed with what the Chancellor of the Exchequer said about them, and with his view of finance. There was one thing in favour of the explanation of the Secretary of State for War. As the right hon. Gentleman had said, he did not know whether this item was coming this year or next year because he did not know when the termination of the Volunteer corps would take place. It was impossible to say that the Volunteers would come to an end this year, and that this expense would be thrown on the Territorial Army. That was the reason why this expenditure was not put in last year's Estimates, and there was a reason why it should not go into next year's. The right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean had said it ought to have been in next year's Estimates, and no doubt, in the ordinary course of things, if the Volunteers had not been done away with, it would have been in next year's Estimates. But the Volunteers had always been in the habit of getting into debt and then paying what they owed out of their grants in the next year. Under the new scheme they were doing away with the Volunteer system and they should pay ready money, in the same way as in the Army ready money was always paid. Most of this money, however, was for clothing, ammunition, and so on, and it had nothing to do with the mortgages on drill halls which several hon. Gentlemen had spoken of. It was the ordinary course of expenditure for which the Volunteers colonels or associations or whoever looked after the finances of the corps got into debt and paid when they got the grant. Now that that system was being brought to an end and the Volunteers were being wiped out, in order to clear off this debt it had been put in as a Supplementary Estimate this year. He thought it was a debt that ought to be cleared off this year, and that it was rather a good thing to see the end of the Volunteers. Of course, it might be said that to a certain extent it relieved next year's Estimates. So it did, but surely if we ought to pay a thing this year it was sound finance that we should pay it even if it did give the Secretary of State for War an advantage in next year's Estimates. He hoped, however, that the National Debt Commissioners would profit by that advantage and that they might be able to reduce more debt next year. But the great point was that this was not an Army debt. It was a private debt of the Volunteers, which in carrying out the new scheme the Secretary of State for War had to take over.

MR. HAROLD COX: It was to be an Army debt.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER said it was made an Army debt under the new scheme and it had to be taken over. It was stated over and over again that these debts were to be taken over, and it was an understood thing when the scheme was passed that they should be. He considered, therefore, that they should be paid at once, instead of leaving them as private debts to be paid next year, even though that gave his right hon. friend a slight disadvantage. He hoped the whole scheme would result in economy. He differed from the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean in thinking that there was any specific pledge that this particular part of the new scheme would by itself be an economy. What he understood was that the whole scheme was to be an economy, and he hoped that that would be the case not only this but in future years. The hon. Gentleman for Preston had moved a reduction, but he would point out that this was a token Vote and to vote on the Amendment would have the same effect as dividing on the Vote. He therefore thought this proposal of a nominal reduction was absolutely unnecessary, unless the hon. Member wished to amplify the division list and vote twice over. If, however, the matter was pressed to a division, he hoped the Amendment would be rejected. As to the item of £8,000 which had been spent he quite agreed with the Secretary of State for War, that there ought to be strict supervision of these County Associations, but he also agreed with the right hon. Gentleman who said that the man who was employed as secretary ought to get sufficient pay. There had been extravagance in managing Volunteer corps in some cases, and he thought the Secretary of State for War was quite right in giving County Associations full power over the money as he had done and giving a lump sum instead of saying: "This man is to be paid so much and that man so much." Might he point out one thing that nobody seemed aware of? It was that these secretaries of County Associations would not necessarily be old soldiers. Everybody talked as if the secretaries would be all ex-officers; but this was not soldiers' work; it was more accountants' work, and therefore that supposition was inaccurate. He had, however, every good wish for old soldiers and old officers who had served their time in the Army, and hoped that many of them would take these positions. He was glad to see soldiers in touch with the civil work, but he thought it ought to be known that this was civil work and would not necessarily be carried out by old soldiers.

He said this because he knew many officers were looking out for these appointments with the idea that they were something of the same nature as the old adjutants' position in days gone by.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he wished to ask the Secretary of State for War a question. They had been discussing this Supplementary Vote for some time, but there seemed to be a good deal of doubt as to what it covered. He understood it to be for charges which had recurred in every year's Estimates as long as the Volunteers had existed, for clothing, ammunition, and things of that kind; but the hon. Member for East Edinburgh undertook to correct him and he said was mistaken in that point of view, and that this was in fact for debts on property other than moneys advanced by the Public Works Loans Commissioners. He did not know whether he had made his point clear to the Secretary of State, but he wished to know which of those two ideas was correct. If it was as the hon. Member who last spoke and as he understood it, it would be what had been a recurring charge while the Volunteers continued and would be in fact a recurring charge still though perhaps under a slightly different name, the charge being not for the Volunteers but for the Territorial Army. He wished to know whether in regard to these items for clothing, ammunition and so forth, by the transition of the Territorial Army the right hon. Gentleman put a double charge on this year and left that of the coming year normal.

Mr. HALDANE said the situation was this. There were now, he believed, 217 battalions. In the new Territorial Army there would be considerably fewer battalions, which would be strengthened. The County Associations would receive the money, which would not be appropriated to each battalion or ear-marked in any way, but would be used for the force as a whole. Just now there were, as he had said, 217 battalions the colonels of which had incurred liabilities for what might be, shortly, called tailors' bills and overdrafts. In a sense the Government were paying double this year, but the reason for that was that it was impossible to get rid of a colonel without liquidating his liabilities. His hon. friend the Member for Edinburgh he thought had the same thing in mind. He had dwelt upon another aspect of the same trouble. But what the right hon. Gentleman had said was strictly true. The Government were in a strict sense paying double this year.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said as he understood there would be the normal charge next year. The Volunteers had hitherto borrowed through the year and had received their payments at the end of the year. The new County Associations were to be kept on a cash basis and the Government would pay out the money to them in the course of the year.

Mr. HALDANE agreed that that was so. Next year the Government would supply the cash and the Volunteers would pay cash for what they wanted. Next year there would be a single charge.

Colonel SEELY (Liverpool, Abercromby) said he supposed the defence of this Vote, which had not yet been raised, was really a good one, namely, that the people who had paid off nearly £20,000,000 of the National Debt in two years had a better title to divert £380,000 from its proper destination than those who had added £150,000,000 to the National Debt. He, like many others, had devoted most of the recess to these County Associations and their work, and he joined with all those who had advised his right hon. friend to instruct his Department not to dictate to the County Associations, not only with regard to what they were to do with their funds, but as to what their duties were. All who had listened to his right hon. friend knew that he desired to give the fullest responsibility to the County Associations. If it was desired that the work should be properly done full responsibility must be given. The failure of the parish councils was due to the absence of responsibility in them, and if these County Associations were in any way checked in the duties they were desired to perform under the Act it was quite certain that the enthusiasm which bid fair to make the new Territorial Force a success would die away as quickly as that which animated the people with regard to parish councils. The whole business would then fall back into the control of the War Office and it would be a failure. He wished to impress on his right hon. friend the desirability of impressing his own view upon the War Office. He could assure his right hon. friend as one who had had some connection with the County Association work, so far as it had gone, that it was necessary to get his Department to understand that the power was very largely transferred from the War Office to the County Associations. He also joined with those who thought it unwise to pay the secretary too little, especially if that was to be done by getting an old soldier to give his services practically for nothing. That was a very bad principle in all Departments of the State, and in another walk of life would be called sweating. Nobody could expect a good man to be obtained at less than from £400 to £600 a year, and it would be a great mistake to pin them down to £180. He was surprised to hear the hon. Member for Derbyshire say that what his district would recommend would be £1,800 for what they had hitherto spent £2,900 upon. He thought there must have been some mistake in the figures which the right hon. Gentleman had given to the House. But if it were the case then he did not see how the new force under the name of the Territorial Army could be expected to go on, because to suppose the pay and expenditure of a branch of the force could be reduced by 70 per cent. seemed an impossibility. He would warn the Secretary of State that if it was proposed to make the force efficient by any such reduction he could not hope to make the Territorial Force a success. His right hon. friend should warn his subordinates not to put the Volunteer Force in too narrow a bed. The disbandment of corps could not be discussed conveniently now, but he would counsel his right hon. friend to go slowly and walk warily, not only with regard to disbandment, but also with regard to re-arrangement. They should encourage all if they compelled none. He could not on this occasion support his hon. friend in the financial proposal he had put before the House.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY (St. Andrews Burghs) wished to endorse what had been said with regard to the County Associations. Little short of a panic had spread amongst those men who thought they were going to get a billet which they believed they could work well, when they found that they were not to be adequately paid for their services. It was impossible to get good men without paying good money. If the Government had given out that they were going to pay £300 a year he believed they would get good men. There was no doubt that an office and a clerk ought to be supplied to the secretary, and that they ought to be adequately paid. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would see to that. In his own county they were all very keen to make the Territorial Army scheme work. Everybody had done his best and was keen to go on, but men were complaining that they did not know how many drills they would have to attend, how many rounds they would have to fire, or how long they would have to be in camp. They were in a state of uncertainty, and the sooner that uncertainty was removed the better. It was now within six weeks of the time when the new Territorial Army would be launched upon its career, and these doubts should be dispelled without delay.

*MR. MORTON (Sutherland) said he did not consider this a good opportunity to discuss the whole expenditure of the new Territorial Army, but he certainly considered that it was an occasion that should be taken advantage of to discuss the pledges which hon Members had given with regard to the question of economy. Economy could certainly not be obtained if the Government proceeded to get money in an irregular and, as he thought, an illegal manner. The main question which ought to be discussed was the means by which this money was to be obtained. In the first place, it was put down as being a Vote for £100, which was incorrect. Whether it was intended or not, such a procedure deceived the taxpayers, because it would go forth from this House that only £100 had been voted, when in fact £358,000 would have been voted for this purpose. So far as he could understand it this was a much worse case than that which occurred twelve months ago. When nearly half a million was taken a year ago it was at least taken to pay off debt, and the properties came into the possession of the War Office, no doubt a valuable security. Therefore, there was something to be said in favour of that. But there could be no advantage in obtaining a Vote in this way except that of deceiving the taxpayer to some extent in regard to what the Territorial Army cost. It was wrong, and in this case there was not the slightest reason for going out of the ordinary course. As he understood, this surplus had been appropriated and solemnly set apart by Parliament for payment of the National Debt, and they were legally bound to pay this money away for the purpose of reducing the Debt whenever they had any surplus on the Votes. It was very easy, of course, to spend money in this way and might become dangerous. He did not think the hon. Member for East Edinburgh properly appreciated the irregularity of the way in which the money was being taken. He had some recollection of what was taken by the War Department when he was on the Public Accounts Committee. He discovered on one occasion that out of a surplus on one Vote about £400 was taken to pay for a dinner given by a Minister as a dinner given by himself. He was invited, but fortunately he did not go. He remembered another occasion when money was taken from one surplus and went to decorating and repairing a house belonging to one of the departments. Money could, of course, be used for the Army and Navy, with the consent of the Treasury, on other Votes than that which it was voted for. The Government, however, could not have used this money without coming to the House, as it was for a different item altogether. He was sorry that a Liberal Government should have done this, for undoubtedly there was not the slightest occasion to do it at all. It might have come on on the regular Estimates. It was a little curious to find the Tory Party objecting to this, but it showed what they might do when in opposition and apparently in their right mind. He had no doubt it would appear to some people irresistibly suggestive of the pot calling the kettle black, or Satan rebuking sin, but he was glad to think they were willing to do something in this direction even if it was only when they were in opposition, because if they could only get the principle maintained that money was not to be taken in this irregular manner, both Parties by and by would have to abide by it. Let the House imagine what might happen when the Tories come in power, if they ever did. They would say that the Liberals set them the example of taking money which ought to go to the payment of the National Debt and applying it to other purposes, and they, the Tory Party could do the same. They were in another difficulty. It was the House of Commons alone which had the voting of this money. They had no House of Lords to help them in this case or in any way to criticise the Vote, because a mere majority of the House could vote away the money without any other authority having the right to interfere. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had admitted that it was wrong, but seemed to think that there were exceptions sometimes. Nobody had attempted even to make this an exception or a case of emergency in any way. He did not know whether it was much use voting for the reduction, because a reduction of £50 on an expenditure of £358,000 seemed somewhat ridiculous. This money ought to have gone for the payment of debt, and the Government could have asked for what they wanted without laying themselves open to the charge of using the money for one purpose when it had been legally set on one side for another. He did not charge the Government with corruption or even improper expenditure, but he did charge them with a grave error of judgment.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): I think our position has been rather a difficult one in this debate. It is very difficult to know how far we may, with propriety, trespass beyond the somewhat narrow limits of this year's finance. But it seems to me, having listened very carefully to all that has been said, that the points really are narrowed down to two. First, is the Government justified or not in asking for a Supplementary Estimate, or ought they not on the other hand to have allowed the money voted, but not spent, to go to the Old Sinking Fund and asked us for a Vote in the next year for these same services. The second point is the way the Government are actually financing during this year the new Associations which they called into being. I understand it would not be desirable to discuss the general future cost of these Associations or the comparative economy of the Territorial Army in relation to the old Volunteer Forces. Upon the first of these points I do not myself take a very strong view, but I think if we take, not the original speech of the right hon. Gentleman, but his last speech, we have a better case than perhaps some of the speakers in the debate appear to have thought. I confess that when I heard the beginning of the debate, I supposed it was to clear off debt of a permanent kind, which once cleared off would never recur, and I thought the right hon. Gentleman used words which could only bear that interpretation. But as the debate proceeded it appeared that at all events there was a difference of opinion about the point, and that in all probability what the Government are really doing is not dealing with the permanent debts of the corps at all. Not only are they not touching debts secured upon real property, but they are not dealing with the permanent liabilities of the Volunteer Force at all. All they are doing is to put on a cash basis transactions which have hitherto been carried on on a credit basis. I think that is not an unreasonable proceeding, but I do not see that the Government have carried it out consistently. That brings me to the second subject, namely, the manner in which they are treating the new Associations and the financial obligations which the new Associations evidently have incurred and must incur. If the Government's view is that all proceedings connected with the Territorial Army are henceforth to be on a cash basis and not, like the transactions of the old Volunteer Force, on a credit basis, they ought surely to see that all the cost the Associations have incurred during this financial year shall be paid out of Government grants in this financial year. Otherwise we are relapsing from a cash into the credit basis which this very Vote condemns. There is only £8,000 put down as far as I can see for expenses of the County Associations in the financial year ending 31st March next, but surely the right hon. Gentleman cannot seriously suppose that no more than £8,000 is going to be engaged to be spent. The thing seems to me quite incredible, and though it would be very inconvenient to discuss the Government's financial proposals in regard to these new Associations, surely it must be evident from the whole course of this debate that £8,000 is a mere fractional contribution to the expenses already incurred in by the County Associations. We know indeed that they have not been able to get on with their work in many cases because they have not been able to get a secretary, because the Government will not allow them to spend the necessary money, and therefore, in one sense there has been a delay in carrying out the operations due to friction between them and the controlling powers at the War Office. But, after all, the fact that the County Associations have not got on so fast with their work as they would have done is not a matter on which we ought to express satisfaction, and it is only by the fact that they have not been allowed to get on with their work that this sum of £8,000 can appear with any decency on the Estimates as representing the cost incurred during the last few months of the current financial year. I do not feel as strongly as some of my hon. friends the impropriety of which the Government have been guilty in trying to put the Territorial Army upon a cash basis. What I complain of is that they have not done so consistently and thoroughly. While they are really carrying out their policy of paying off the existing debts of the bodies which are about to be abolished, they are permitting the new bodies to fall into the old and vicious system of entering into pecuniary obligations upon their personal or corporate credit in some unexplained fashion, and not supplying those funds which are absolutely necessary if their duties within the financial year are to be carried out. I think the right hon. Gentleman is perfectly justified in refusing to attempt any broad survey of the financial results of his Army reorganisation. He is right to delay that till he brings forward the Army Estimates for next year, and I am not going to press him to anticipate the statement he will then make. But I think when we are discussing the manner in which you are to treat the Volunteer or Territorial Army, when we are discussing a question intimately connected with the policy of having it on a cash and not a credit basis, the Government are bound to show us that they are not perpetuating in regard to the new force all the faults into which they admit the House and the country have in the past fallen when dealing with the Volunteer Force, and owing to which alone these debts have had to be incurred by successive colonels of Volunteer regiments. I do not propose to criticise very severly the difference between paying off this money in the present year and putting it on the Estimates for next year. I have not the stern conscience and the unbending virtue of my right hon. friend near me, though I am bound to say he only expressed the unbroken tradition of that Committee over which he so admirably presides. But I do think that, behind all the technical questions of Treasury views and views of the Public Accounts Committee, there lie larger questions of policy on which I should have liked to have a much fuller statement than the right hon. Gentleman has yet found it convenient to give.

*Mr. CARLILE (Herefordshire, St. Albans) said he had tried to gather from the right hon. Gentleman's remarks what the total was in this Vote which had any connection with uniforms and other matters. He thought the proposals to allow County Associations to expend 10 per cent. of the total cost of administration in their area upon the remuneration of the Secretary was not an efficient proposal at all. Some areas might be very small and then of course the cost would be proportionately small; but on the other hand there were areas which might be very large and in which the means of communication were very difficult, and although the total cost in that area might not be very large, the work of administering it might be very serious indeed. The proposal that 10 per cent. should be used for the remuneration of the secretary rested upon an unsound basis. What they wanted to occupy the position of secretaries was a good supply of young men who possessed great capacity and organising skill. This would be essential because they would require from them a large amount of intelligent work. If the amount placed at the disposal of the County Associations was limited in the way suggested, they would be obliged to accept not even first or second rate men, but the best man they could get for the small remuneration placed at their disposal. Reference had also been made to the position which in the future private subscriptions were to occupy. They would all realise that if the Territorial Force was to be made efficient either ample funds must be placed at its disposal or private subscriptions would have to be once more encouraged. It was extremely desirable that the new Territorial Force should not depend in any degree upon voluntary subscriptions. They desired the County Associations to devote themselves closely to their work, and they could not do that if every man felt he would have to pay considerable sums out of his own pocket towards the cost. Reference had been made to the expenses of commanding officers. Many hon. Members had been commanding officers for many years, and they knew that often to ensure a battalion being continued when their command ceased, they had had to put their hands largely into their own pockets in order that their successors might be able to take over the command. He was sure the Secretary of State for War desired that the Territorial Force should be self-supporting or at any rate should be supported entirely by the funds granted under the Act and not from private donations. If the secretaries were to be efficiently paid it was quite clear the right hon. Gentleman must modify his proposal to limit the amount to 10 per cent. or the County Associations would have to subscribe as individuals to make good what was lacking on the part of the War Office. That seemed to him to be a very undesirable limit, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would deal with the subject in no cheese-paring way, but place sufficient funds at the disposal of the County Associations for this purpose. It was not merely a question of maintaining outside organisations, because County Associations had to provide ranges, and transport for mobilisation and to incur all sorts of expenses which did not obtain in the past. Even now, as the right hon. Member for Derbyshire had pointed out, the County of Derbyshire received far less under the new scheme than it had received hitherto, and if that was so, it was manifest that the Derbyshire force could not undertake new work such as providing and registering transport on mobilisation. If the income under this scheme in any case was less than had hitherto been considered necessary to maintain the force with less detail and less organisation then it was essential that the right hon. Gentleman should give the County Associations more latitude, especially in regard to the remuneration of the organising man who would have to devote his life, energy, and intellect to this work. The secretaries ought to be placed upon such a footing that they would not feel they were being paid in a miserly and cheese-paring manner for the great services which would be required of them.

Question put, and negatived.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1907–8.

CLASS II.

2. £100,000 (Supplementary), Board of Agriculture and Fisheries.

MR. STANLEY WILSON (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness) said he had one or two important questions to put to the representative of the Board of Agriculture, and he wished to know if he would be in order in raising the question of the salaries of agents for Crown lands. He wished to know first of all whether new agents had not been appointed for Crown lands in the firm of J. Carter, Jonas & Co., and if so when were they appointed.

THE TREASURER OF THE HOUSEHOLD (Sir EDWARD STRACHEY, Somersetshire, S.) said the salaries of agents for Crown lands did not come under this Vote, which consisted of items to cover the expense of additional work which had been thrown upon his Department by three Acts which were passed last session.

MR. STANLEY WILSON contended that under the heading of salaries and wages he would be in order in raising this question of the agent for Crown lands.

*THE CHAIRMAN: If the responsible Minister says that the salaries of the gentlemen in question do not come in this Estimate it is clear that the matter cannot now be discussed.

SIR E. STRACHEY: This only applies to new work.

MR. STANLEY WILSON said that that raised an entirely new point. Probably the increase was due to the fact that a change in the Crown agent had taken place. He thought he was entitled to raise the question.

*THE CHAIRMAN: If the hon. Member is correct in his contention, he is perfectly in order in raising it, but I understand that the Minister in charge denies that.

MR. STANLEY WILSON asked on what Estimate the question could be raised if it was not in order to raise it now.

*THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member can only raise questions which properly come under this supplementary charge. He is not entitled to raise the question of the salary of an official who was appointed under the Estimate passed last session.

MR. STANLEY WILSON: But he was appointed since last session.

*THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member surely understands that the salary was passed last session, and if the official has been changed that has nothing to do with the Supplementary Estimate.

MR. STANLEY WILSON said that there was an increase of £950 shown by the Supplementary Estimate, and he contended that he was in order in raising any question of wages on this particular Vote.

MR. ASQUITH: I am informed that not a single penny will go to the gentleman against whose appointment the hon. Member desires to protest. That being so, it is clearly out of order to discuss the matter.

MR. STANLEY WILSON asked the hon. Member for South Somersetshire to state every single item included in the £950.

SIR E. STRACHEY: The salaries asked for are for the Small Holdings Commissioners and inspectors, and for inspectors under the Butter and Margarine and the Destructive Insects and Pests Acts of last session, which Acts were not in force when the Estimates of the Board of Agriculture for the present financial year were voted.

Vote agreed to.

3. £20 (Supplementary), The Mint, including Coinage.

CLASS III.

4. £1,870, Public Trustee.

MR. J. D. WHITE (Dumbartonshire) said that when the Public Trustee Act was passed they were assured that the office would be conducted on the basis of the outgoings being met by the income. The Estimate now submitted did not include, he thought, some expenses which ought to have been included. A pamphlet which had been very widely circulated upon the work of the new office was not accounted for on the Estimate. He saw it was printed for the Stationery Office, and he wished to know whether it would come under the Stationery Office account. The circular had been sent broadcast in envelopes marked "On His Majesty's Service." He wished to know whether the cost of advertising the Department was to be borne by the Post Office. It seemed to him that it was. He did not see any item for rent, rates, and taxes. He thought the new office ought to be conducted on a self-contained financial basis, and all the expenditure connected with it ought to be entered on this Estimate. He protested against the plan of dumping some of the expenditure connected with it upon the general taxpayers. The general taxpayers included Scottish and Irish taxpayers, but the Public Trustee Act did not extend to Scotland and Ireland, so that they got no benefit from the establishment of the office. He appealed to the Government to see that the Public Trustee Office was placed on a self-contained basis, and that no part of the expense was borne by the general taxpayers.

THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL (Sir SAMUEL EVANS, Glamorganshire, Mid.) said the Attorney-General was not aware that this question was to be raised, and he was not present. He had taken careful note of what had been said by the hon. Member, and he would bring the matter to the notice of his learned friend.

Vote agreed to.

CLASS V.

5. £327, Treasury Chest Fund.

Resolutions to be reported To-morrow; Committee to sit again To-morrow.

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Whiteley*)—put, and agreed to.

Adjourned at two minutes before Eight o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 11*th February*, 1908.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Ravensthorpe Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Llanelly and Burry Port Water Bill [H.L.], Read 2ª.

Clyde Navigation (Superannuation) Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.], (No. 10). A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order relating to the Clyde Navigation; and

Transfer of Training Colleges (Scotland) Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.], (No. 11). A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order relating to the Transfer of Training Colleges in Scotland:—Were presented by the Lord Hamilton of Dalzell; 1ª; to be printed; and (pursuant to the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, section 7) deemed to have been read 2ª, and reported from the Committee.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

DUCHY OF LANCASTER.

Account of the Receipts and Disbursemets of the Duchy of Lancaster in the year ended 21st December 1907, also a separate Account of the Capital of the said Duchy to same date; Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

MILK SUPPLY—PROPOSED LEGISLATION.

*THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: My Lords, I rise to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture if it is the intention of the Government to introduce legislation with regard to the milk supply during the present session; and, in the event of such legislation being introduced by the Local Government Board, what steps the Board of Agriculture propose to take for the purpose of safe-guarding the interests of agriculture.

I should like to explain, as briefly as possible, my reason for putting this question. I hope it is unnecessary for me to assure the noble Earl that I have not been led to do so through any feeling of want of confidence in the Department over which he presides, nor of any hostility to further legislation with regard to the milk supply. I can speak not only for myself, but as chairman of a committee that has been appointed to watch legislation with a view to safe-guarding the interests of agriculture in this matter, and on which we have representatives of the most important breed, agricultural, and other societies in England, as well as a large number of representatives from Wales, Ireland, and Scotland. Dairy farmers and milk producers realise that legislation is not only desirable but necessary to ensure a supply of pure and wholesome milk to the consumers in the country. I can go further, and say that they would welcome legislation, provided that in it they were treated with justice and equity, and that that legislation was comprehensive, general, and applied to the whole country.

I think it will be admitted that the present condition of the milk control throughout the country is eminently unsatisfactory. We suffer from orders which are permissive, and from legislation which has been piecemeal. The Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milkshops Orders of 1885 and 1886 give power to local authorities to make Orders as to the inspection of cattle and dairies within their districts. Some local authorities have made Orders which are carried out in a satisfactory manner; on the other hand, in some districts Orders have been made which are carried out in a perfunctory way. I regret to say that in a very large number of cases local authorities have not chosen to make any regulations at all, and in those districts the milk supply is absolutely without any supervision whatever.

Then, my Lords, we have had legislation dealing with localities. The London County Council have already powers in three Acts dealing with this matter, and in the General Powers Bill which they have introduced this session they are endeavouring to get further powers in that direction. Other corporations in a similar way have obtained powers for dealing with the milk sent into their areas, and the result of this has been that farmers in different districts are placed under absolutely different conditions. We find in some districts that there is no supervision whatever. In other districts there is supervision by the local authorities. In a considerable number of districts we have two or more authorities within the same area, with the result that unnecessary burdens are placed upon the farmer in regard to the manner in which he carries on his business. I think this will be generally admitted to be an unsatisfactory state of affairs, and that a public Bill dealing with the whole question is much desired, both in the interests of the producers and the consumers.

With regard to the first part of my Question, I notice that the President of the Local Government Board, in replying to an hon. Member in the House of Commons the other day, said the Government were desirous that there should be legislation with regard to the milk supply during the present session. Considering the vast importance of this question I think I shall not be unduly pressing the noble Earl if I ask him to give us a little more definite information. I should like to ask him whether it is not only the desire of the Government, but their intention, to bring in legislation during the present session. I presume that the Government would not deal with a large subject like this, affecting a most important branch of the greatest industry in the country, without very fully and carefully considering how they were going to treat the question, and I hope the noble Earl will be able to tell us whether up to the present time, the Government have really considered what line they are going to take in dealing with the matter. I also presume that any part of the proposed Bill affecting the agricultural interest would be submitted to the Board of Agriculture for their consideration and approval; and I should be much obliged if the noble Earl would tell us whether, up to the present moment, he has received any suggestions from the Local Government Board as to the form which this legislation is to take, or, indeed, any communication from the Board whatever on this subject. I think it is only fair that, if legislation is to be introduced within the next few months, we should have a definite statement to that effect, and the Government should take the earliest opportunity of putting the form and the manner in which they are going to legislate before the public, so that those interests which are likely to be affected may have full and ample opportunity of considering the matter, and of expressing their views.

I was rather induced to put the second part of my Question from some remarks which have fallen from the noble Earl in speeches on agriculture which he has made on different occasions. I observe that in October last, speaking to the North Eastern Farmers' Association, the noble Earl told his audience that a very heavy burden might be placed on the dairy industry by ill-considered and unnecessary restrictions; and that Sir Edward Strachey, who represents the Board of Agriculture in the House of Commons, quite recently warned the farmers that they might expect stringent, and I think, if my memory serves me right, he used the word "drastic," legislation in the immediate future with regard to this question. These expressions have, very naturally, I think, aroused considerable feeling of insecurity and of alarm among dairy farmers and stock-owners throughout the country.

I can assure the noble Earl that this feeling is very wide-spread. It is not only confined to the large dairy farmers, but is also felt strongly by the small men. The small owner feels that if any hardship were inflicted on the dairy industry by legislation, it would fall with especial severity upon the class of man who owns two or three cows; and on that class in whom the noble Earl, as we know, takes such a sincere interest—the occupiers of small holdings. I believe that if it were known that this question was going to be dealt with by the Board of Agriculture, agriculturists would look upon any possible legislation with equanimity, because they are satisfied with those many assurances, which I know are perfectly sincere, which have fallen from the noble Earl, of his desire to do his best to safe-guard the interests of agriculture.

But this Bill will be brought in by the Local Government Board, and we feel that, though the Local Government Board have the assistance of able medical officers of health, of experts, scientists, bacteriologists, and gentlemen who are admirably qualified to advise them as to the purity and distribution of milk, and of what I may call the sanitary side of the question, yet, so far as we are aware, the Local Government Board have no information and no advice on the agricultural, or what I may call the practical, side of the matter. It will be obvious that this question has to be dealt with practically as well as theoretically. In dealing with the milk supply you have to go to the source—namely, to the farm; and we contend that matters connected with cattle, their treatment, management, housing, and inspection, should be dealt with by the advice of, and through, the Board of Agriculture, who possess a highly qualified and practical veterinary staff, in whom the agriculturists have confidence.

I hope that the noble Earl, the President of the Board of Agriculture, will be able to-day to say something to allay that feeling of insecurity to which I have referred, by giving us an assurance that he will undertake that farmers have fair play in this matter. That, my Lords, is all that the dairy farmers of the country demand. I think it is a very moderate request. If I may sum it up, I would say that they wish, in any matter of legislation, their interests to be treated with justice and equity; that as far as possible they should be guarded against suffering any loss; but that if any individuals should sustain loss through legislation passed for the public good, they should be adequately compensated by the public for that loss; and also, that what I may call the agricultural side of this question, should be dealt with practically by qualified persons. I think those principles are such as generally to commend themselves, not only to agriculturists, but to all fair-minded people throughout the country.

I was pleased to see that one of our greatest authorities on hygiene and public health fully realises that these principles should be accepted. I refer to Sir James Crichton-Browne, the President of the Sanitary Inspectors' Association, who, in a speech the other day, said he hoped the Local Government Board in dealing with the milk supply would confer with the Board of Agriculture, and bear in mind the interests of the honest producer as well as those of the innocent consumer. I do not wish to put our case more strongly than it was put by that expert in matters of health, who may be taken to regard the matter rather from the point of view of the good of the public than from that of the particular interests of the agricultural classes concerned.

In conclusion, I should like to make a suggestion to the noble Earl. It is not a new suggestion, and I was sorry to observe that it was one which did not meet with great encouragement from the President of the Local Government Board in the House of Commons. I would not press the noble Earl to give me an answer in regard to my suggestion. I would only ask him to be good enough to give it his careful consideration, and I think it is of such a moderate description that the noble Earl will be able to give it a favourable consideration. It is that before any legislation is introduced dealing with this large subject, a public inquiry should be held into the whole question of the milk supply of the country. I would suggest that the inquiry might be undertaken by a Committee—a Select Committee, a Departmental Committee, or a Joint Committee—and that on that Committee should be placed representatives of both sides of the question, of the sanitary side, and of the agricultural side, the side of the consumer and that of the producer. The Committee should hear evidence on both sides, and I honestly think they would be able to arrive at a satisfactory solution of the question.

I would point out to the noble Earl, if he thinks this would cause delay, that I see no reason why the inquiry should take a very long time. We are agreed on the main principles, and on the desirability of a pure milk supply. We are all agreed that the consumer should be given pure milk, and that no injustice should be done to the producer. It is only a matter of detail, of means as to how this can best be accomplished. Therefore, I do not think an inquiry of this sort need take a very long time; and I can assure the noble Earl that if he can see his way to bringing about such an inquiry it will be most satisfactory to the dairy farmers and agriculturists, and I am confident that it will do a great deal to allay that feeling of insecurity, and almost of alarm, which I regret to say prevails to a very considerable extent at the present moment. I beg to ask the Question standing in my name.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES (Earl CARRINGTON): My Lords, I hope the noble Earl will permit me, in the first place, to thank him very sincerely for the kindly and courteous way in which he has spoken of the efforts of the Board with which I am connected. I am glad to be able to inform him that I have received a letter from my right hon. friend, Mr. Burns, in which he says it is the intention of the Government to introduce legislation this Session with respect to the milk supply. I quite agree with the noble Earl in all he said as regards the present control of the milk industry. It is not at all in as satisfactory a condition as we should wish. The noble Earl spoke of the feeling of insecurity and alarm entertained, not only by tenant farmers but by small holders throughout the country. I can assure him that we are equally anxious to do all we possibly can to place the industry on a safer and more satisfactory basis; and, with him, I earnestly hope that the matter will be dealt with not only theoretically but also practically. The great object of the present Government, I need hardly say, is practical legislation. We try to follow out the advice, "Let your policy be a policy of results," and I can assure the noble Earl that that will be our object and aim in this direction as well. In the second part of his Question the noble Earl asks what steps the Board of Agriculture propose to take, in the event of this legislation being introduced by the Local Government Board, for the purpose of safeguarding the interests of agriculture. I can hardly, I think, be expected to answer that question now as fully as I might wish, and to make a definite pronouncement, until the proposals have been a little more developed; but I need not say that I will do all in my power legitimately to protect the farmers in legislation of this sort, consistent with the public interest.

The noble Earl then made a suggestion with respect to a public inquiry. He did not press for an immediate answer, but I can assure him that every possible consideration will be paid to his suggestion, upon which I will at once consult my right hon. friend the President of the Local Government Board. Before sitting down, perhaps it will not be out of place to say that the news from Scotland as regards the cows that have foot and mouth disease is very satisfactory. Up to the present there are no fresh outbreaks, so far as we can trace, and the disease has been confined to the place where it broke out. I feel certain that your Lordships will approve of the promptitude of the steps taken in this matter by the officials of my Department, and I sincerely hope that we may be able to confine the outbreak to its present limits.

EARL ROSEBERY: As regards the last point, I should like to ask whether the noble Earl has received any representation from Linlithgowshire on the subject of the restrictions?

EARL CARRINGTON: Yes

EARL ROSEBERY: And does my noble friend mean to pay any attention to it?

EARL CARRINGTON: I am afraid I must ask for notice of that Question.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (The Earl of ONSLOW): My Lords, the latter part of the noble Earl's speech was undoubtedly reassuring, but I cannot say that I thought the answer he gave to my noble friend Lord Northbrook, was quite so satisfactory. The noble Earl has not carried us very much further than we had got by the statements made in public by the President of the Local Government Board. Mr. Burns told us some time ago that the Government hoped to deal with this subject this session, and, naturally those who have had the advantage of taking part in the business of government gathered from that that there had at least been some conversations between the heads of the Local Government Board and the Board of Agriculture with regard to the proposals to be laid before Parliament. But the noble Earl informs us to-night that he has apparently only just received a letter from the President of the Local Government Board telling him exactly what all the world has known for some time past. He went on to say that he could not promise to offer the opinions of the Board of Agriculture until the proposals were somewhat more definite. We are all really waiting to know what the Government are going to do in this matter; and I would venture to point out to the Government that which they do not seem to be aware of, although I admit I think the wish may be father to the thought, that there is such a thing as the House of Lords, and that at this period of the session this House is not very busily occupied. I would venture to suggest to the President of the Local Government Board and my noble friend whether it would not be a good opportunity of giving this House something to do if these proposals, at any rate in their initial stage, were brought forward here, so that the farmers of the country would be able to express an opinion upon them.

It is not only the farmers who are concerned. I, in my Department, am anxious to know whether the Government really means to push to a conclusion legislation on this subject. There are a number of Bills before Parliament dealing with this matter in the case of large boroughs, and particularly London. We have had for years past what are known as model milk clauses. These clauses, I venture to say, are not satisfactory to anybody. They were a compromise arrived at between those interested on different sides, and it was always understood that they were to be allowed by Parliament in measures brought forward by the great corporations without variation, pending the time when the matter would be dealt with for the whole country by the Government. That time, we hoped, had arrived, but from what the noble Earl has said to-night it seems to me that the proposals are very much more in the abstract than they can be said to be in the concrete. I hope that before the session is much older we shall have some information from the Government, not only that they have aspirations, but that they do intend to deal with the matter, and also upon what lines they propose to proceed. This is not a party matter. It is one upon which we are all agreed, and it is only a question of seeing that whatever regulations are imposed in the interests of the health of the people are drawn up with the greatest consideration towards the agricultural classes, and with the least desire unnecessarily to harrass them.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: As apparently the subject is going to drop, might I ask my noble friend opposite whether he will take into consideration the introduction in this House of a Bill dealing with this matter? I am sure we all agree with his statement that this is a question which ought to be dealt with from the practical as well as the theoretical point of view; and I should say that in this House there is quite as large an experience, and quite as great knowledge of matters affecting the country as in the other House of Parliament. I would point out that up to the present time we have no indication that there is any business to be given us to do, and if the noble Earl can induce his colleague to have the Bill introduced in this House, he will be doing a very useful and practical thing.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord TWEEDMOUTH): My Lords, I am not in a position to say that we are prepared at once to introduce a measure of this sort in this House. The President of the Local Government Board has declared quite clearly that a Bill is to be introduced this session, and I hope it will be soon introduced, whether in this House or the other. With regard to the further point to which the noble Earl referred, I think he may probably reckon that in the course of the next two or three weeks we shall have two Scottish Bills in this House to discuss.

EARL ROSEBERY: After they have been discussed in the other.

House adjourned at Five o'clock,
till To-morrow, a quarter past
Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 11*th February*, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Liverpool Corporation (Streets and Buildings) Bill (by Order). Read a second time, and committed.

Stockport Corporation Bill (by Order). Read a second time, and committed.

PETITIONS.

CONGO FREE STATE.

Petition from Kilsyth, for protection of the Native races; to lie upon the Table.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES (IRELAND) BILL.

Petition from Macroom, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSED PREMISES (EXCLUSION OF CHILDREN).

Petitions for legislation: From Burythorpe; Crowthorne; Croydon (two); Elstree; Hadleigh; Harpenden; Leavening; Middlesbrough; New Barnet; Newport (Mon.); Ramsey; Ripley; St. Albans; and St. Ives; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY.

Petitions for legislation: From Acocks Green; Barrington; Galley Hill; Handsworth; Holloway; King's Norton; Leicester; London (two); Northampton; Pittington; Portsmouth; St. Albans; St. Helens; Saltley; Sidcup; Smethwick; Southsea; Sparkhill; Southwick-on-Wear; Stockton-on-Tees; Topsham; Tow Law; and Witton Gilbert; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES (ELECTORS, ETC.) (UNITED KINGDOM.)

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 30th January; *Sir Charles Dilke*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 44.]

DUCHY OF LANCASTER.

Accounts presented, for the year ended 21st December, 1907 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 45.]

PAPERS LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Inquiry into Charities (County of Berks).—Further Return relative thereto [ordered 28th March, 1905; *Mr. Griffith-Boscawen*]; to be printed. [No. 46.]

Inquiry into Charities (Administrative County of Devon).—Further Return relative thereto [ordered 26th July, 1905; *Mr. Griffith-Boscawen*]; to be printed. [No. 47.]

ALIENS (NATURALISATION).

Address for "Return showing the names of all Aliens to whom Certificates of Naturalisation have been issued and whose Oaths of Allegiance have, between the 1st day of January, 1907, and the 31st day of December, 1907, been registered at the Home Office, giving the country and place of residence of the person naturalised, and including information as to any Aliens who have, during the same period, obtained Acts of Naturalisation from the Legislature (in continuation of Parliamentary Papers No. 75, of Session 1907)."—(*Mr. Herbert Samuel.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Children in Police Courts.

MR. WEDGWOOD (Newcastle-under-Lyme): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will say how many boys and girls under twelve and between twelve and sixteen were apprehended by the Metropolitan Police in 1907; and what are the regulations with regard to the detention, care, and feeding of such offenders at the police stations.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) Statistics for the whole year 1907 are not yet available. During the first six months of that year, 2,723 boys and girls, under sixteen years of age, were apprehended by the Metropolitan Police. Care is taken to release such offenders on recognisance at the earliest moment, and if it is necessary to detain them they are detained (whenever possible) elsewhere than in the cells, a matron being in attendance in the case of girls and children of tender years. Meals, consisting of tea, coffee, cocoa, or milk, with bread and butter, are given.

Dock Inspectors.

MR. CARR-GOMM (Southwark, Rotherhithe): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many factory inspectors are appointed by his Department to examine the conditions of labour and inspect gear on floating craft in the port of London.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The staff attached to the four London districts and the Kent district, which is available for inspection of docks in those districts, and for the enforcement of the Regulations made under the Factory Act, is seventeen inspectors and three inspectors' assistants, but none of these is detached for dock inspection solely. The work of inspecting docks is done as part of the general work of inspection under the Act.

Factory Inspectors.

MR. NIELD (Middlesex, Ealing): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what is the number of the present staff of inspectors and assistant inspectors, male and female, of factories and workshops; and whether it is proposed to make any, and what, additions to their numbers in the immediate future.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The present authorised strength of the inspecting staff of the Factory Department, including all ranks is: Men, 152; women, 13. As regards the second part of the Question, I am not in a position to make any statement at the present time.

Small Holdings.

MR. CORRIE GRANT (Warwickshire, Rugby): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he can state the number of acres of land for small holdings applied for in each county of England and Wales under the Small Holdings Act of last year, the number of applicants, and generally how the Act is working.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) Our information as to the applications made to county councils for small holdings under the Act of last session is by no means complete, but the following statement shows that in twenty-seven counties in England over 4,700 persons have applied for nearly 87,000 acres—

County.	Number of Acres applied for.	Number of Applicants.
Bucks - - - - - - - -	5,353	253
Cambridge - - - - - - -	4,631	641
Chester - - - - - - -	867	39
Cumberland - - - - - -	—	17
Derby - - - - - - - -	610	24
Devon - - - - - - - -	1,853	98
Dorset - - - - - - - -	2,300	—
Durham - - - - - - -	2,742	161
Gloucester - - - - - - -	3,722	182
Hereford - - - - - - -	2,951	131
Herts - - - - - - - -	1,500	—
Hunts - - - - - - - -	6,000	430
Isle of Ely - - - - - - -	2,000	300
Isle of Wight - - - - - -	853	44
Lancaster - - - - - - -	1,250	95
Lincoln (Parts of Holland) - - - -	7,276	346
,, (Parts of Kesteven) - - - -	2,368	159
,, (Parts of Lindsey) - - - -	2,007	75
Norfolk - - - - - - -	5,000	—
Oxford - - - - - - -	10,235	518
Rutland - - - - - - -	1,200	58
Somerset - - - - - - -	8,300	600
Suffolk, East - - - - - -	842	40
,, West - - - - - -	725	33
Wilts - - - - - - - -	6,000	—
Worcester - - - - - - -	5,923	438
Yorks (West Riding) - - - - -	465	18
Totals - - - -	86,973	4,700

So far as the Board are as yet able to judge the statutory committees are in almost every case carrying out their duties with energy and despatch, and landowners in all parts of the country appear ready to assist in the matter. We have every reason to be satisfied up to the present with the way in which the Act is working.

Postal Facilities in Nottingham.

MR. RICHARDSON (Nottingham, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the principal sub-post office in Nottingham, situated on the Derby Road, was burnt down in October of last year; that the nearest sub-post office from which the inhabitants of that neighbourhood can get a halfpenny stamp or send a parcel by post is three-quarters of a mile in one direction and half a mile in another; and will he take immediate steps for opening a sub-post office in this populous centre, and thus prevent a continuance of this inconvenience.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The office to which the hon. Member refers was re-opened yesterday. I approved the appointment of the new sub-postmaster on 11th January, but he could not be installed until certain structural alterations had been made in the premises he offered.

Economic Policy of Indian Government.

MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether information regarding the economic policy of the Indian Government is available in any concise and untechnical form; and, if not, whether, in view of the misstatements and exaggerations regarding the so-called drain, he will consider the desirability of publishing a Memorandum similar to that drawn up by the Government of India in refutation of misstatements regarding its land policy and the incidence of its land assessments.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) A Memorandum of this kind would bristle with points of controversy, if it went beyond statement of material facts. Those facts, from whatever point of view they were selected and adopted, are all of them already accessible. But I may, perhaps, be allowed to draw attention to the official publications annually presented to this House, such as the financial statement of the Government of India and the explanatory Memorandum, both of which contain information on the subject.

Convictions of Males under Sixteen for Indecent Language and Cruelty to Animals.

MR. WEDGWOOD: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will say how many males, under the age of sixteen, were convicted during 1907, in the United Kingdom of cruelty to animals and the use of indecent language.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I regret that I cannot give the information which my hon. friend asks for. The figures of crime in England and Wales in 1907, will not be available for some time to come; and even when they are complete they will not enable me to answer this Question. The age of the offenders can be given only when they are apprehended, not when they are merely summoned and fined; and the use of indecent language is not a separate offence.

Overcrowding in Scotland.

MR. J. D. WHITE (Dumbartonshire): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the fact that, in Appendix 2 of the recent Report on the Cost of Living of the Working Classes in the principal industrial towns of the United Kingdom, the percentages of the total populations occupying overcrowded tenements, *i.e.*, more than two persons per room, are given for the specified towns of England, Ireland, and Wales, but not for the specified towns of Scotland; it being stated that the figures for the Scottish towns are not available; whether he can state what are the corresponding figures for these Scottish towns; and whether he will consider the advisability of framing the forms for the next Census so as to obtain that information.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) My right hon. friend has asked me to reply to this Question. My attention was directed some time ago to the fact that the figures referred to are not given in the Scottish Census Report, and under my instructions a Return has been prepared for presentation to the House which will give full information on the subject for the whole of Scotland. The figures for the specified Scottish towns are as follows—

Town.	Percentage of population living more than two in a room.
Aberdeen - - -	38·1
Dundee - - -	49·44
Edinburgh - - -	32·94
Glasgow - - -	54·7
Greenock - - -	54·17
Kilmarnock - -	55·94
Leith - - -	43·8
Paisley - - -	58·76
Perth - - -	28·26

My hon. friend will remember that the Board of Trade Report [Cd. 3164] draws attention to the fact that the tenement system of blocks of small flats is in Scotland the normal type of working-class dwelling, and that the rooms are generally much larger than those of an English cottage. The question of including these figures in the next Census Report will receive consideration.

Postage Rates to China.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): To ask the Postmaster-General whether penny postage is established between Great Britain and Shanghai, Amoy, Canton, and other places in China where there are British post offices, or agencies of the Hong Kong post office; if so, whether, under these circumstances, he will give instructions for the penny postage system to be extended to the British post offices at Constantinople and Salonica from this country; and what is the estimated cost of this reform.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) There is at present a penny post for letters between this country and the agencies maintained by the Hong Kong Post Office at Shanghai and other places in the Chinese Empire. That Empire has not yet joined the Postal Union and the position of the Hong Kong agencies is therefore different from that of the British agencies in the Ottoman Empire, which like Great Britain is a member of the Union. Having regard to this and other circumstances of the case, it is not intended at present to extend the penny rate to these offices.

Edgeworthstown Post Office.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether Edgeworthstown post office is about to be made a sub-office instead of, as for years, being head office of the Granard district; if so, on what grounds this change is being made; is any reduction in staff contemplated; and will full inquiry be made before the change takes place.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) After very full consideration I have decided to reduce Edgeworthstown to the rank of a sub-office. The change is purely an administrative measure in order to improve control and organisation. One of the Edgeworthstown officers will be transferred to Longford to meet the increase of work there consequent on the change. The alteration will not in any way impair the existing postal facilities of the district.

Lough Foyle Fishery Limit.

MR. BARRIE (Londonderry, N.): To ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland) whether he has received a resolution from the Londonderry County Council referring to the recent refusal of the Irish Privy Council to sanction the fishery limit at the entrance to Lough Foyle as fixed by his department; and what action he proposes to take in reference thereto.

(*Answered by Mr. T. W. Russell.*) The Department have received the resolution in question, and have informed the Londonderry County Council that the Lord-Lieutenant in Council declined to approve of the by-law referred to. As that decision is final, the Department are unable to take any further steps in the matter.

Boy Clerks in the Civil Service.

MR. SNOWDEN (Blackburn): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will state the number of boy clerks appointed in the years 1905, 1906, and 1907; and also the total number of appointments made to the following classes, viz., Second Division, Assistants of Customs, Excise, and assistant clerks, showing the number of these appointments which were gained by boy clerks excluding those gained by ex-boy clerks.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) I have received from the Civil Service Commissioners the information for which the hon. Member asks, namely—

I. Number of Boy Clerks registered in years 1905, 1906, and 1907.

In 1905 - - -	596
In 1906 - - -	923
In 1907 - - -	1,100
	2,529

II. Number of Persons certificated to certain other Classes of Appointments in the Civil Service during those years, together with number of those Appointments gained by Boy Clerks (excluding ex-Boy Clerks).

Year.	Second Division.		Assistants of Customs.		Assistants of Excise.		Assistant Clerks (Abstractors).	
	Total.	Number of Boy Clerks among them.	Total.	Number of Boy Clerks among them.	Total.	Number of Boy Clerks among them.	Total.	Number of Boy Clerks among them.
1905	184	47	96	6	110	4	246	124
1906	292	73	33	3	110	0	281	168
1907	208	60	55	7	176	2	232	136
Total	684	180	184	16	396	6	759	428

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Lords of the Treasury will amend the regulations made under the Superannuation Acts in such a manner as to enable the service given by boy clerks employed in the Post Office, Dublin, who have been promoted to adult clerkships in the Second Division, to be counted after the age of sixteen years, for the purpose of calculating pension on retirement after continuous service, in the same way that sorters, stampers, porters and telegraphists are permitted to reckon all continuous service after the age of sixteen years for superannuation purposes.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) Service as boy clerk, unlike the other cases referred to by the hon. Member, terminates automatically on reaching the age of twenty, and does not qualify for pension. I do not think that there are any "special circumstances," within the meaning of Section 3 of the Superannuation Act of 1887, which would justify the Treasury in reckoning it for pension when it happens to be followed by service in an established capacity.

Fire Resisting Properties of Ferro-Concrete.

MR. HORNIMAN (Chelsea): To ask the First Commissioner of Works what is the estimated life of buildings in reinforced or ferro-concrete, such as is now being erected for the post office in King Edward VII. Street, E.C.; whether he has had any report of how this kind of construction resists the effects of fire; and has he seen any reports or publications respecting the buildings so constructed after undergoing the test of fire at San Francisco.

(*Answered by Mr. Harcourt.*) Buildings of ferro-concrete are believed by experts to be at least as durable as those of brick or stone. I have received a very valuable report confirming this opinion on this subject from the Joint Committee of the Royal Institute of British Architects which is available to the hon. Member at the cost of 1s. The experience of San Francisco, though interesting, is not of conclusive value, as the buildings there were subjected to earthquake fracture before the occurrence of fire.

Application for Discharge of Henry Sheppard from the Navy.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether his attention has been called to the fact that a widowed woman named Mary Sheppard, of 12, Windmill Street, Limerick, made application for the discharge of her son, Henry Sheppard, from the Royal Navy, the said son being an A.B. on board of H.M.S. "Aboukir"; that she grounds her claim on the Widows' Act, that her husband died on 23rd September, 1907, that her son is her only means of support, and that his late father's employers have kept his position open for his son pending his discharge from the Navy; and whether under these circumstances the claim of this woman will be favourably considered, and her son discharged.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) In reply to an inquiry made on 19th December, Mrs. Sheppard was informed that her son's application for discharge should be made through the commanding officer. Nothing further is known of the case, but inquiry is being made. Discharge on foreign stations is only allowed in special circumstances, the decision resting with the Commander-in-Chief.

Deaths from Starvation.

MR. SUMMERBELL (Sunderland): To ask the President of the Local Government Board what were the number of deaths in 1907 in London upon which a coroner's jury returned a verdict of death from starvation, or death accelerated by privation; how many of these took place in Whitechapel; if he has not yet received the Home Office Returns as to these deaths, whether he will without delay obtain from the Whitechapel guardians or from the Poor Law inspector of the district the number of such deaths from starvation in Whitechapel in 1907; and whether he has conferred, or will confer, with the guardians of Whitechapel as to steps to prevent or diminish the number of such deaths.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) I am not able to give the numbers for the year 1907. The usual Return has not at present been moved for, and I understand that consequently the necessary particulars have not yet been obtained by the Home Office from the coroners. I have communicated with the clerk to the Whitechapel guardians as to the occurrence in that union in 1907 of cases of the kind referred to, and I am informed that the medical superintendent of the infirmary has caused a search to be made and can find only one such case, viz., that of George Wright, who died on 25th July last, and in respect of whom the verdict of the coroner's jury was that he died from pneumonia accelerated by neglect and want of food. I will inquire as to the circumstances of this case, but I am not at present aware of any need for action of the kind suggested in the concluding part of the Question. In connection with this matter the character of the district and the large number of persons of migratory habits attracted thereto by free shelters and common lodging houses must be borne in mind.

Outbreak of Foot-and-Mouth Disease at Gorgie.

SIR W. J. COLLINS (St. Pancras, W.): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture whether, in the case of the recent outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease at Gorgie, the diagnosis was established as the result of naked-eye appearances or upon bacteriological evidence; and, if the latter, what are regarded by the Board of Agriculture as the bacterial characteristics of the disease.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) The diagnosis was based on the naked-eye appearances of the disease. The lesions were so typical of foot-and-mouth disease that no experimental test was considered necessary to establish the diagnosis.

Untenanted Land at Clonfin.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any further steps have been taken by the Estates Commissioners towards purchasing the untenanted lands of Clonfin, in North Longford, for sub-division amongst the tenants of the surrounding congested districts.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I informed the hon. Member on 21st February, 1907, that the Estates Commissioners had been unable to discover what persons, if any, are entitled to sell the untenanted lands on the Thompson estate, Clonfin, which it is presumed are the lands referred to in the present Question. The Commissioners have not since succeeded in ascertaining the names of the persons who may be entitled to sell, but if the hon. Member is in a position to furnish them with the names they will make further inquiries in the matter.

Reinstatement of Mrs. Mary Eagan.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork County, N.E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state what steps have been or are being taken by the Estates Commissioners to effect the reinstatement of Mrs. Mary Eagan in her former holding at Cahirduggan, on the Nason estate, county Cork, having regard to the fact that the farm is in the landlord's possession and derelict.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners have communicated to the owner the price which they are prepared to give for Mrs. Eagan's former holding, and the landlord has signified his willingness to accept that price. The matter now awaits the institution of formal proceedings for sale by the owner.

Inspectors under the Seed Supply Act.

MR. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Local Government Board have received a copy of a resolution recently passed by the Lismore Board of Guardians with reference to the appointment of inspectors under the Seed Supply Act; whether the suggestion in the resolution that only persons nominated by the county committees of agriculture be eligible will be adopted; and whether he is aware that serious complaints have been made as to the unsuitability of persons appointed on former occasions.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Local Government Board have received a copy of the resolution referred to, but do not intend to adopt the suggestion contained therein. No complaints of the nature referred to in the concluding part of the Question have reached the Board.

The Parker Estates near Tallow.

MR. O'SHEE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what steps have been taken by the Estates Commissioners to acquire the Parker estate, at Janeville, near Tallow, county Waterford; what have been the causes of the delay in the matter; and what is the present position.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) In March, 1905, the Estates Commissioners issued to the Land Judge a request under Section 7 of the Act of 1903 in respect of the estate referred to in the Question. After the necessary documents had been lodged, the Commissioners had the estate inspected in October, 1906. The Commissioners then made an offer to the Land Judge, and, pending its reconsideration by them at the request of the Judge, the lands were let for grazing. On 31st ultimo the Commissioners sent in an amended offer which will in due course come before the Land Judge for consideration.

Fermoy Gas Company and the Military Gas Works.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM: To ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office if his attention has been called to the fact that the military gas works in Fermoy Barracks have recently been connected with the premises of the Great Southern and Western Railway Company; whether he is aware that the gas is supplied by the Fermoy Gas Company to the military barracks at 2s. 11d. per 1,000 cubic feet and from the military works to the railway company af 5s. 10d. per 1,000 cubic feet; will the gas company be obliged to refund the money received from the railway company; and if the War Office intends to allow the military works to continue to be used for the private supply of gas.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Fermoy Gas Company, a non-statutory body, supplies the military with gas at 2s. 11d. per 1,000, while charging the town 5s. 10d.; has Government sanction been obtained to the supply of the railway station from the barracks gasworks; will the money thus received for War Office gas be accounted for to Government; and whether, as the Irish Courts have frequently decided that this company acts illegally in breaking up streets without statutory authority or the consent of the local authority, the War Office will abstain from assisting the gas company against the town council in its struggle to compel the gas company to resort to Parliament for powers and rates of charge.

(*Answered by Mr. Buchanan.*) The facts are substantially as stated in the Questions. The Army Council are of opinion that the Military Gas Works should not be permitted to supply any private customers of the gas company of Fermoy, and instructions have been issued accordingly that the supply at present given to the railway company should cease after a week's notice.

Compassionate Allowance—Case of James Norris.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether any fund is now available out of which a further compassionate allowance might be made to James Norris, Ardagh, county Longford, whose son was killed in the South African War; and, if so, will the case be considered with a view to a further grant.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) If the hon. Member will kindly have the application form, which was sent to him yesterday, duly filled in and returned to the War Office, the case shall receive full consideration.

Pension — Case of Private Thomas Morrissey, 1st Leinster Regiment.

Mr. JOYCE: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the case of Private Thomas Morrissey, No. 4333, B. Company, 1st Lenister Regiment, who enlisted in 1894, and was discharged in 1898 suffering from a bad leg, brought on, in the doctor's opinion, by heavy route marching; also, that up to the present this man's leg cannot be cured, and that, through this cause, he cannot follow any regular employment; whether he is aware that this man has made repeated applications to the War Office and forwarded his papers, and has never been given a reply; and whether, under these conditions, a small pension could be given him to enable him to keep out of the workhouse.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) This man was discharged after less than four years service in consequence of varicose veins in the left leg. The Medical Board which recommended his discharge was of opinion that his disability was not primarily caused by his service as a soldier. This case was fully considered by the Commissioners of Chelsea Hospital on his discharge in 1898, who decided that he had no claim to pension. He has been answered six times to that effect, and was informed in March 1906 that no further application could receive attention. He is not, therefore eligible for the award of any pension from Army funds.

Retiring Allowances of Quartermasters.

Mr. GUINNESS (Bury St. Edmunds): To ask the Secretary of State for War, whether anything can be done to better the retiring allowance of quarter-masters who have attained the rank of honorary major, in view of the fact that a combatant major is granted £300 per annum on retirement at the age of forty-eight years, while a man who has risen from the ranks by sheer merit gets only £200 per annum on retirement as a major at the age of fifty-five years.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The question has been recently considered, but it has not been found practicable at present to take any steps towards increasing the retired pay of these officers.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

The Navy—The August Review.

MR. COURTHOPE (Sussex, Rye): On behalf of the hon. Member for West Marylebone I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty whether every ship which took part in the Naval Review last August had its full complement of officers and men on board; and, if so, how many men of the Royal Naval Reserve and Naval Volunteers were embarked temporarily to man the ships; and what was the total proportion of untrained men carried.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): The Answer to the first part of the Question is: Yes, with the exception of midshipmen and junior accountant officers. As regards the second part, none were embarked to complete complement, but about 147 Royal Naval Reserve men were undergoing their annual training in the Fleet at the time. After such a lapse of time the information asked for in the third part of the Question cannot be furnished, but the proportion must have been very small.

MR. COURTHOPE: On behalf of the hon. Member for West Marylebone, I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty how many battleships and how many cruisers which took part in the Naval Review last August had to proceed into dock for repairs immediately after the review, or had to be docked before being able to go to sea; and what were the names of the ships, together with the date on which they were last in dock for repairs prior to the review, and the period of their stay in dock both prior to and after the review.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: None, Sir.

Rosyth.

MR. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham): I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty if he can state approximately when the main contract for the works at Rosyth is likely to be let.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Nothing can be done till Vote 10 is passed by the House. In the event of Vote 10 being taken early, it may be possible to let the contract during the summer.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY (St. Andrew's Burghs): Can the right hon. Gentleman give any indication when Vote 10 will be taken?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I propose to take it in accordance with the usual custom immediately after Vote 1, as new works cannot be undertaken till Vote 10 is passed.

Navy Estimates.

MR. ARTHUR LEE: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he can state when the Naval Estimates will be ready for distribution to Members of this House.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The Estimates are in the hands of the printer, and will probably be ready for issue about Thursday week.

War Office Publications.

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if his attention has been called to the official publication by the Stationery Office for the General Staff at the War Office of a quarterly review of books of military interest, and to the inconvenience of combining with approval of the volumes reviewed, quotation of unfriendly references to allies, such, for example, as those concerning the Japanese Chief of Staff and the Japanese generals, on page 6 of the January number; whether these references have been communicated by the General Staff to the Royal United Service Institution and distributed at the public expense to headquarters of commands, educational establishments, units, and reference libraries; and whether he will direct care to be taken in future to avoid unguarded official quotation of individual opinion.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): The aim of the reviews in the publication in question is to indicate to the officers of the Army the nature and purport of the contents of a book. To do this extracts are indispensable. These books are selected solely for their educational value as military works; and the fact that they are included in the list does not in any way imply approval of the opinions expressed in them. At the same time, I agree with the right hon. Baronet that such quotations as the one to which he has drawn my attention are better omitted, and I have directed that these reviews shall be in future confined to the purely military aspects of the books they deal with. The references were communicated as stated in the Question.

Volunteer Reduction.

*SIR FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if it be intended to reduce the number of men serving in the First Volunteer Battalion, Manchester Regiment, of which the headquarters are in Wigan.

MR. A. WILLIAMSON (Elgin and Nairn): I beg also to ask the Secretary of State for War if the Territorial Army scheme involved a reduction in the number of Volunteers in the counties of Moray and Nairn to about one-half; if he has received memorials from the county council of Morayshire and from the town councils of Elgin and Forres petitioning against the proposed reduction; and if, in view of any such petitions and of the strong feeling which has been aroused, and having in view the record and services of the 3rd Volunteer Battalion Seaforth Highlanders, he can now see his way to sanction the allocation of a battalion of the Territorial Army to the counties named.

MR. HALDANE: The quota of troops which each county is to be asked to raise has not yet been finally settled. A scheme based partly upon population and partly upon units already existing has already been communicated to County Associations. They have been asked to consider this scheme and confer with the General Officers Commanding of their respective commands upon it. Until the reports of these conferences and the recommendations made at them have been considered by the Army Council and received its approval, it is impossible to say how far existing units will be affected by the new scheme, and I cannot therefore,, reply to the specific points the hon. Gentleman raises. As regards the Question of the hon. Member for Elgin and Nairn, memorials have been received from the county council of Elgin and from the Elgin Town Council.

MR. A. WILLIAMSON: In the event of its being impossible to allocate a whole battalion to the county, will the right hon. Gentleman consider the possibility of allocating to it some other branch of the service so that the services of a large number of Volunteers may not be lost to the county?

*SIR FRANCIS POWELL: When will the right hon. Gentleman be able to answer my Question?

MR. HALDANE: When we have got the Report of the General Officer Commanding, which I hope will be very shortly, the Army Council will be able to consider the matter. We are doing our best to avail ourselves of the services of Volunteers, but, of course, military circumstances may preclude our taking advantage of the offer.

Recruiting Meetings on Licensed Premises.

MR. THORNE (West Ham, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to a meeting that was held at the Star Hotel, Crieff, on Tuesday evening, 4th February, at which Captain Bathue, adjutant, delivered an address and conferred with intending recruits in connection with the Scottish Horse, Imperial Yeomanry, D. Squadron; and if he has sanctioned the holding of meetings in licensed premises for recruiting purposes.

MR. HALDANE: Nothing is known of this matter at the War Office. The General Officer Commanding-in-Chief concerned has been called upon to report upon the subject.

MR. COURTHOPE: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that sometimes licensed premises are the only places available for holding a meeting in rural districts?

MR. HALDANE: That may be so, and it is very unfortunate. But it should be avoided wherever possible.

Magisterial Functions in India.

*MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India what proportion of the criminal work, original and appellate, in India is disposed of by district and other magistrates in whose case revenue and magisterial functions are combined, and what proportion is disposed of by magistrates who do not exercise revenue and other administrative powers.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. MORLEY, Montrose Burghs): The information asked for is not available in this country, and in view of the labour which would probably be involved, I do not think I should be justified in calling on the Government of India to supply it.

Censorship of Correspondence in India.

DR. RUTHERFORD (Middlesex, Brentford): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that letters addressed to certain individuals in India have been tampered with and delayed in delivery; whether it is by the orders of the Government of India or the Secretary of State; and whether he will consider the advisability of putting a stop to this practice.

MR. MORLEY: The Government of India reported to me that, for special reasons, they felt it to be necessary, in the early part of last year, to take action, which it was within their discretion to take, under the provisions of the Indian Post Office Act, 1898. This action was, as I understand, entirely discontinued after about six weeks.

Freedom of Speech in India.

DR. RUTHERFORD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether, in the interests of good relations between rulers and ruled, he will advise the Government of India to repeal The Prevention of Seditious Meetings Act, 1907, and the Regulation of 1818, under which Lajpat Rai and Agit Singh were arrested and transported without trial.

MR. MORLEY: I cannot admit that the best interests of rulers and ruled would be served by the measure that my hon. friend suggests, and the Answer to his Question is therefore in the negative. I may add that the Act of 1907 is in force in one district only, and that no meeting has been prohibited since it came into force.

*MR. SMEATON (Stirlingshire): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Regulation of 1818 and Subsidiary Local Regulations conferring similar powers were of immense value in and after the pacification of Burma in ridding the country not only of the enemies of the Government, but of the enemies of the people, and that these Regulations were welcomed by all classes, notably by the Elders and by the best of the Buddhist clergy?

MR. MORLEY: I am not aware of that, but I am very glad to hear it.

MR. LUPTON (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): Does the right hon. Gentleman think that the peace of India is promoted by the closing of meetings?

MR. MORLEY: No meeting has been stopped.

Police Shadowing in India.

DR. RUTHERFORD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that Members of Parliament and correspondents of journals in England have been shadowed by detective police while travelling in India; and whether he will consider the advisability of putting a stop to this practice.

MR. MORLEY: If the Gentlemen concerned will address the local governments, if they have been put to any sort of inconvenience by the alleged practice of which my hon. friend complains, I can promise that they will receive every consideration.

*MR. REES: Is it not a matter of common knowledge that travellers in India are apt to fall into bad hands?

[No Answer was returned.]

Port of Spain Water Supply.

MR. SUMMERBELL (Sunderland): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State to the Colonies if he is aware that the town board of Port of Spain, under the Port of Spain Waterworks (Amendment) Ordinance, is now empowered the sole party to repair the pipes, etc., of the town properties; that notice of such repairs and payment for the same to the owners of such properties is in many cases imperfectly given and demanded; that on non-payment of such sum, in some cases only amounting to 12 cents. the board has power to enforce, and does enforce, payment by selling such properties or land by public auction before the doors of the town hall, intimation of such sale being generally by advertisement in the local newspaper; that when the board's solicitor does give notice he charges 80 cents. for such notifying letter; that members of the town board have been known to be the purchasers of such properties put up by auction; and, if so, whether he can state what action, if any, he intends to take, with a view to the adoption of a more just method in regard to the collection of such accounts.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): The process for the recovery of arrears of rates and charges due to the town board as water authority is laid down in the Ordinance cited by the hon. Member, and is the same as that in force in respect of house rates in Port of Spain. Sale of the property is, however, not the only procsss, there being an alternative by way of distress. The Secretary of State is not aware that any abuses of the nature described by the hon. Member have occurred in Port of Spain, but the Governor will be asked for a Report in the matter.

Crown Agent's Office Finance.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will state the years in which there were deficiences in the income of the Crown Agents' Office, the amount of the deficiency in each of the last ten years, and the reasons for the deficiencies in each year in which there was a deficiency.

MR. CHURCHILL: The following deficiencies in the income of the office of the Crown Agents for the Colonies have occurred during the last ten years—

	£
1898	4,437
1899	3,173
1900	2,483
1901	23,720
1903	6,362
1904	5,265
1905	6,731

The usual cause of a deficiency is the fluctuation in the amount of commission received on loan business, which is very variable. The deficiencies in 1901 and 1903, were mainly due to expenditure on the new offices taken in the former year.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, by what amount the Crown Agents' Office Reserve Fund has increased during the year 1907; and if he will state the main items which have led to the increase.

MR. CHURCHILL; The increase in the Crown Agents' Office Reserve Fund during 1907 amounted to £46,863. The main items were: Dividends on Investments, £12,280; commission on issue of loans, £17,422; and surplus income, £14,587.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the salary drawn by the senior Crown Agent for the Colonies is considerably in excess of that paid either to the Permanent Under-Secretary of the Colonial Office or the Permanent Secretary to the Treasury; if so, what is the amount of the excess and the reasons for placing that office upon a higher rate of pay than that enjoyed by the last-named two officials; and whether, in all the circumstances, the Secretary of State will appoint an independent committee to inquire into and report upon the constitution, administration, and management of the office of the Crown Agents for the Colonies and the salaries paid to the officials thereof, to the end that it may be placed upon a footing in all respects with other departments of His Majesty's Civil Service.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg further to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the exhaustive inquiry instituted in 1901 by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham extended to the internal management and clerical organisation of the office of the Crown Agents; and, if not, whether he will himself institute an inquiry in this particular direction so as to satisfy himself on the head in question.

MR. CHURCHILL: The senior Crown Agent for the Colonies receives £2,500 a year. As I explained to the hon. Member on Tuesday last, the Crown Agents are not Civil Servants and the true position is to compare their salaries with those given to officials of great commercial and financial institutions. The Secretary of State associates himself with the views expressed by his predecessors upon the work and administration of the Crown Agents Office as an organisation distinct from the Colonial Office; but he will be glad to consider the desirability of appointing a small inter-departmental Committee to report upon the best method of selecting the clerical and technical staff for the Crown Agents' Office, and particularly to consider the conditions of tenure, the scale of payment of salaries and pensions, and how far the arrangements in that office are in accord or can be brought into harmony with the principles governing the Civil Service.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): Have the Government assured themselves that the kind of preference which is granted to British industries and merchant firms through the Crown Agents' Office is quite in harmony with the free trade policy of the Government?

MR. CHURCHILL asked for notice of the Question.

*MR. REES: Was it not necessary lately to give a personal allowance to a Crown Agent to enable him to occupy the higher position of Under-Secretary?

MR. CHURCHILL: I should not like to say one way or the other.

Chinese in South Africa.

MR. W. T. WILSON (Lancashire, Westhoughton): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can state how many indentured Chinese labourers there were in South Africa at the end of 1907; and at what date will the indentures of the last batch of Chinese imported expire.

MR. CHURCHILL: The number on 31st December last, was, I understand, 35,676, and the latest term of labour under indenture will expire in January, 1910.

The Indian Punitive Expedition.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary for India a Question, of which I have given private notice, whether it is the fact that no Press correspondents will be allowed to accompany the punitive expedition which the Government of India is about to despatch against the Zakka Khels tribesmen; and, if so, who is responsible for this omission of the means of communication to the public here of the incidents of that expedition; and on what ground is this prohibition based having regard to the restraining influence of the Press.

MR. MORLEY said he was not sure whether this regulation had been made or not, but he would inquire.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) asked whether hon. Members would have any opportunity of expressing their opinion as to the policy of this expedition, or, indeed, whether it was wise at all?

MR. MORLEY said he did not know what his right hon. friend the Prime Minister would say, but personally he hoped that no discussion would take place till the expedition had at all events made some advance.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND asked whether the right hon. Gentleman could give any indication as to the probable cost of the expedition, how many men were to be employed in it, or was this war to be entered upon like all other wars without the slightest consideration.

MR. MORLEY said that His Majesty's Government had sanctioned this expedition, and the expedition must therefore continue. If the House was of opinion that it was a wrong expedition, or that its cost was likely to be excessive, it would be for the House to pronounce its judgment.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND asked what opportunities hon. Members would have of forming an opinion on the question, whether the information at the disposal of the Government was to be communicated in any way to hon. Members, or whether no opportunity whatever was to be given to them of expressing an opinion on a matter which would involve an expenditure of thousands and tens of thousands of pounds while people in this country were starving.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL asked whether the right hon. Gentleman, having regard to the importance of this subject, would have any objection to telegraph to the Indian authorities and Lord Kitchener asking whether it was true or not that this prohibition of war correspondents to accompany the expedition had been issued, and, if so, whether the House would be able to revise it.

MR. MORLEY said that he had already promised to ascertain the reasons for the regulation having been made; and, if it had been made, whether or not it might be altered.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND gave notice that he would take the earliest opportunity to draw attention to the practice of the Government of the day embarking on military operations without giving the representatives of the people any opportunity whatever of saying whether or not the expenditure was justified, and to move a Resolution declaring that expeditions of this kind should not be undertaken without giving hon. Members some opportunity of expressing the opinion of their constituents on the subject.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said that the expedition was stated to be an expedition of a punitive character to inflict "speedy and condign punishment." Had the right hon. Gentleman considered the cost of money as well as of lives that would be involved?

MR. CORRIE GRANT (Warwickshire, Rugby) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that during the last great war our Japanese allies not only refused to allow war correspondents to accompany their troops, but provided them all with comfortable hotel accommodation at Tokyo?

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): What is this war about?

MR. MORLEY said that if the information that had been already supplied to the House in the form of a Question and Answer circulated with the Votes that morning was read it would be seen that there was a perfectly good account given of the causes of the expedition.

*MR. LUPTON (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would telegraph instructions to India that the troops were not to burn buildings, orchards, farms, and so on, and to turn women and children out into the cold.

[No Answer was returned.]

Macedonia.

EARL PERCY (Kensington, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in proposing to the Powers that the task of restoring public security in Macedonia should be undertaken by an increased *gendarmerie* force under the command of foreign officers with executive authority, and that the funds for the maintenance and equipment of this force should be secured by a reduction of the Turkish regular army now stationed in the country, His Majesty's Government have re-affirmed the proposition laid down by Lord Lansdowne that, in the event of the adoption of such a policy, it would be reasonable to expect that Bulgaria would be willing to carry out a simultaneous and corresponding reduction, and to enforce measures to the satisfaction of the Powers, with the view of preventing the organisation and equipment of insurgent bands in her own or Turkish territory; and that, failing a satisfactory arrangement on this basis, the Powers should give a collective guarantee that during the specified period, Bulgaria would not be allowed to occupy any portion of Turkish territory.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): The proposition to which the noble Lord refers was not included in the proposals recently made by His Majesty's Government. These proposals were put forward in general terms, and a small decrease of Turkish troops, whose place would be taken by a corresponding increase of *gendarmerie*, would not necessarily raise so large a question. In the event of proposals of wider scope being made in the future, it would be reasonable that the question of some form of guarantee such as Lord Lansdowne indicated should again be considered.

The Hague Conference.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs when there will be laid before Parliament additional Papers relating to the proceedings at the Hague Conference; and whether he is in a position to explain the reasons which made His Majesty's Government, after proposing the creation of an International Prize Court of Appeal, unable to join in signing the Convention thus obtained at the time of its signature by many other Powers.

SIR EDWARD GREY: The Papers are in course of preparation, and will be issued as soon as possible, but they are very voluminous and have not yet been published at The Hague. The British Plenipotentiaries signed none of the instruments drawn up by the Conference before they left The Hague, and the same course of procedure was adopted on the occasion of the First Peace Conference. There was no reason for making the Prize Court Convention an exception to this course.

Macedonian Gendarmerie—Baron Herenthal's Speech.

MR. GOOCH (Bath): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to the speech of Baron Herenthal to the Hungarian Delegation to the effect that the employment of *gendarmerie* to hunt down the bands in Macedonia was impracticable; whether he has received favourable or unfavourable replies from the other Powers; and what steps he proposes to take to secure the acceptance of the proposals of His Majesty's Government.

SIR EDWARD GREY: My attention has been called to the speech in question; replies in this sense have been received from the Austrian and Russian Governments. As soon as the views of all the Powers are known, His Majesty's Government will consider what course they should adopt.

MR. LYNCH (Yorkshire, W.R., Ripon): In what sense?

SIR EDWARD GREY: In the sense which is evidently familiar to the hon. Member who put the Question.

Transvaal Finance.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what sums, if any, have been issued to the Government of the Transvaal, under the Transvaal Loan Guarantee Act, 1907.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.): The Government of the Transvaal recently issued £500,000 six-months Treasury Bills, which are guaranteed under the provisions of the Act referred to. There has been no issue to the Government of the Transvaal under the guarantee.

Suggested Tax on Titles.

MR. BOTTOMLEY (Hackney, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will consider the expediency of imposing a tax on titles.

MR. ASQUITH: I would refer my hon. friend to the reply which I gave him yesterday upon another suggestion for taxation.

MR. BOTTOMLEY: As my Question was not reached yesterday, I would ask the right hon. Gentleman what his reply was.

MR. ASQUITH: The reply has been circulated with the Votes. I am afraid the hon. Member had not the curiosity to look for it. It was this: "Any suggestion in regard to new taxation will receive my most sympathetic and careful consideration." Perhaps by this I may anticipate the answer to other Questions.

Anstruther Harbour.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he can state whether he has been able to consider the petition handed to him last September with regard to the vital necessity of improving the Anstruther Harbour; and whether he can hold out any hope of a favourable reply.

MR. ASQUITH: The petition has received my careful attention, and I regret that, until the Anstruther local authorities are in a position to comply with the conditions which, as they have been informed, apply to cases of this kind, the Treasury is precluded from making a grant for the harbour.

Case of Patrick Callighan.

MR. MACPHERSON (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been directed to the case of Patrick Callighan, of Preston, who was sentenced to death for murder, was afterwards reprieved and is still in prison; whether he is aware that, owing to poverty, the witnesses for the defence were not all present at the trial, and that Martha Whiteside, the principal witness against the prisoner, went to the police, but that Detective-Inspector Simpson refused to hear what she had to say; that Martha Whiteside disappeared; that the prisoner's brother communicated these facts to the Home Department; that finally Police-Inspector Walmsley, who had charge of the case, disappeared; and whether he will institute an inquiry by his Department, or cause a public inquiry into this matter, without delay.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): This case has received repeated and most careful consideration, and inquiry has been made with regard to the recent statements by the prisoner's brother. I find that the prosecution arranged to pay the expenses of the witnesses whom the accused wished to call at his trial, and he furnished a list of eight witnesses, who were warned to appear and told that their expenses would be paid, but the defending counsel in the exercise of his discretion decided in the prisoner's interest to call only some of them. It is not the fact that Martha Whiteside went to the police, and that they refused to hear what she had to say, or that she has disappeared. I am informed that Inspector Walmsley has left the district for reasons which have nothing to do with the present case. I can find no reason to doubt that the prisoner was rightly convicted of the murder.

State Reformatories Bill.

MR. WEDGWOOD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he intends to re-introduce the State Reformatories Bill this Session.

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes; I intend to re-introduce the Bill, though possibly the name may be altered.

Naturalisation Laws.

SIR J. RANDLES (Cumberland, Cockermouth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department in view of his resolution carried at the Imperial Conference on 9th May, that an inquiry should be held to consider how far, and under what conditions, naturalisation in one part of His Majesty's dominions should be effective in other parts of those dominions, for which purposes a subsidiary conference was to be held if necessary, whether this inquiry could be extended to the consideration of the desirability of uniformity as far as practicable in the treatment of natural-born British subjects of Asiatic descent, who are much more numerous than naturalised aliens of Asiatic descent.

MR. GLADSTONE: The subject referred to at the end of the Question is, in my opinion—which is confirmed by that of my noble friend the Secretary of State for the Colonies, within whose jurisdiction it falls—outside the scope of any inquiry which could proceed from the resolution on the subject of naturalisation which was carried on my motion at the Imperial Conference.

SIR J. RANDLES asked whether the right hon. Gentleman acquiesced in the proposition that natural-born Asiatic subjects should be placed in an inferior position to that of Asiatics naturalised under the proceedings contemplated; and, if not, whether the right hon. Gentleman would make representations on the subject to the Minister affected, whether at the India Office or the Colonial Office.

MR. GLADSTONE: I think that is a Question for my right hon. friend the Under-Secretary for the Colonies. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will put it on the Paper.

MR. HART-DAVIES (Hackney, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when it is proposed to introduce the reduced scale of fees for naturalisation.

MR. GLADSTONE: There has been no decision to reduce the fee charged for the grant of a Certificate of Naturalisation.

Unemployment and Imports.

MR. CHIOZZA MONEY (Paddington, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if his attention has been directed to the fact that the British External Trade Returns for January exhibit a decline of £1,893,342 in imports of raw materials, a decline of £2,400,140 in imports of manufactures, and a decline of £999,468 in exports of manufactures; and whether, in view of the amount of unemployment and undeserved distress which these figures indicate, he adheres to his resolution not to legislate on the subject of unemployment in the present session.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): I am aware of the figures referred to. I do not think that the returns, which only relate to a single month, can be taken as conclusive evidence of distress and want of employment in the country. I see no sufficient reason for altering the conclusion already arrived at with regard to legislation on the subject of unemployment during the present session.

MR. CHIOZZA MONEY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that in December the returns showed more out of work to the extent of 1 per cent. as compared with the return for the previous month?

MR. JOHN BURNS: Yes.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: Do the Government not intend to propose any legislation with regard to the unemployed?

MR. JOHN BURNS: Only that which is mentioned in the King's Speech.

MR. CHIOZZA MONEY: Is it not very easy to show by statistics that on any day in the present winter there must be at least 400,000 men out of work in the United Kingdom?

MR. JOHN BURNS: That may be so, but I should like to remind the hon. Member of his speech on 2nd November, 1907, in which he said: "To judge from past experience we must expect depression in 1908, but there is little reason to anticipate disaster. It is not a black time but a slack time that is before us." I am prepared to meet that contingency with all the sympathetic and valuable methods at our disposal.

Derby Road, Nottingham, Post Office.

Mr. J. WARD (Stoke-on-Trent): On behalf of the hon. Member for South Nottingham, I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the principal sub-post office in Nottingham, situated on the Derby Road, was burnt down in October of last year; that the nearest sub-post office from which the inhabitants of that neighbourhood can get a halfpenny stamp or send a parcel by post is three-quarters of a mile in one direction and half a mile in another, and will he take immediate steps for opening a sub-post office in this populous centre, and thus prevent a continuance of this inconvenience.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): The office to which the hon. Member refers was re-opened yesterday. I approved the appointment of the new sub-postmaster on 11th January, but he could not be installed until certain structural alterations had been made in the premises he offered.

Scottish Postmasterships.

Mr. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he can state how many head postmasterships in Scotland have been filled by officers from the Post Office service in England during the last five years; how many vacancies in England were filled by officers from Scotland during the same period; whether he can state the aggregate amount of the salaries in each category; and whether he can state how many of these officers were previously in service in each country before appointment as head postmasters.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: I deprecate the comparison implied in the hon. Member's Question, since it suggests a separation, which fortunately does not exist, between the Post Office service in Scotland and England. I find that seventeen head postmasterships in Scotland have been filled by officers from the Post Office service in England during the last five years; thirteen head postmasterships in England have been filled by officers from Scotland during the same period; the aggregate amount of the salaries was £4,500 and £4,460 respectively. One of the officers who received appointment to a postmastership in Scotland was originally employed in Scotland, and four of the officers who received appointments to postmasterships in England were originally employed in England.

Board of Education—Corporal Punishment Regulation.

Mr. WEDGWOOD: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether his attention has been drawn to the observations on the subject of corporal punishment in the Revised Instructions for 1902, in which it is urged that no punishment which excites the emotion of terror should ever be employed; that in infant schools no punishment should be inflicted which causes bodily pain; that in schools for older children corporal punishment should be discouraged as an ordinary expedient in a boys' school and altogether in a girls' school; if he will say whether steps have been taken by the Board of Education to give effect to these observations; and what number of cases of the corporal punishment of boys, girls, and infants occurred during 1907 in the public elementary schools in London, Liverpool, Birmingham and Leeds.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of EDUCATION (Mr. McKenna, Monmouthshire, N.): The Revised Instructions have been superseded by a volume entitled "Suggestions for the Consideration of Teachers and Others Concerned in the Work of Public Elementary Schools," on page 11 of which the subject of corporal punishment is dealt with. The attitude of the Board is substantially the same as that indicated by my hon. friend's quotation. The discipline of the school and the means taken for enforcing it are primarily matters for the local education authority, and the Board do not intervene unless specific cases of alleged excessive punishment are brought to their notice. I have no information as to the last paragraph.

Grants to Necessitous School Areas.

Mr. WEDGWOOD: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether the necessitous area school grants are to be confined this year to those areas which established their claim to them last year, although other areas have now greater need; whether these original beneficiaries have now established a special right to a subsidy from the Exchequer not enjoyed by other districts; and how long this subsidy is to continue.

MR. McKENNA: In order to ensure that the sum available for distribution should not be exceeded, it was necessary to limit the recipient authorities to those who established a claim in the preceding year. I hope to bring forward in connection with the forthcoming Education Bill financial provisions dealing with Exchequer grants in aid of the expenditure of local authorities under Part III. of the Act, in which due regard will be had, amongst other things, to the rate-burden in certain areas.

MR. ALDEN (Middlesex, Tottenham) asked whether any reduction in the advances to necessitous districts had been made this year.

MR. McKENNA said he could not tell in each individual case whether it was so or not; but a limitation had been put on the amount which was allowed for the purpose of administration.

MR. WEDGWOOD asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that there were now many local areas in the country not entitled to the grant, where the rates were heavier than in other areas which were receiving these grants.

MR. McKENNA said there were such areas, but they were very few.

Sheep Dipping.

MR. RENDALL (Gloucestershire, Thornbury): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether his attention has been called to the conviction of Mr. James Rich, of Rodbourne, Malmesbury, a well-known Wiltshire farmer, for allowing 208 sheep to be removed from Castle Douglas, in Scotland, to Wiltshire without having them dipped in accordance with the recent Sheep Dipping Regulations; whether he is aware that the chairman of the bench stated that Mr. Rich was liable to a fine of £1,000, according to the Sheep Dipping Regulations; and whether he will take steps to obtain such information from practical farmers, with a view to making these regulations a proper safeguard instead of an arbitrary restriction and danger to traders.

THE TREASURER OF THE HOUSEHOLD (Sir EDWARD STRACHEY, Somersetshire, S.): The Board have been informed by the Clerk to the Wiltshire County Council that Mr. Rich was convicted for having removed 308 Scotch sheep from his farm in Wiltshire without having dipped them twice in accordance with the provisions of the Wiltshire Sheep Scab Regulations of 1905. These Regulations are made in pursuance of Article 9 of the Sheep Scab Order of 1905, which was issued by the Board as the result of the recommendations made by the Departmental Committee on sheep-dipping after hearing the evidence of farmers and others possessing a practical knowledge of the subject. The Board have no information as to any statement made by the Chairman of the Bench.

*MR. LEIF JONES (Westmoreland, Appleby) asked whether many experienced farmers were not of opinion that salving sheep, though a more costly and difficult process than dipping, was a better safeguard against sheep scab; and whether, therefore, farmers who wished to salve their sheep instead of dipping them, might not be allowed to do so.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY said he was aware there were some farmers who held that opinion, but on the other hand the medical officers of the Board held the contrary view.

Swine Fever.

MR. COURTHOPE: I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether, owing to the strong opinion of agriculturists that a full inquiry should be immediately instituted into the whole subject of swine fever, and the fact that such an inquiry must necessarily occupy many months, the President of the Board of Agriculture will reconsider his decision on the subject, and will appoint a departmental committee on the subject forthwith.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: The suggestion that the Departmental Committee should be appointed was very carefully considered by my noble friend, but he came to the conclusion that before any step was taken in this direction it would be better to await the results of the new Orders which are about to be issued and are based, as he has already indicated, upon actual experimental investigations conducted by the veterinary officers of the Department.

Afforestation.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, how much has been spent in the last ten years on re-afforestation in Great Britain and how much in Ireland by the Woods and Forests Department; and how much is received yearly from Ireland by that Department in the shape of quit and Crown rents.

MR. J. A. PEASE (Essex, Saffron Walden): The amount spent by the Commissioners of Woods during the last ten years in England and Wales on afforestation, by which term is meant planting new areas not previously under timber, as distinguished from replanting in old woods, is about £5,000. The cost of land in England and Wales bought during the same period for afforestation is about £1,200. There has been no expenditure on planting new areas in Scotland or Ireland, but £25,000 has recently been spent in buying land in Scotland for afforestation. The Commissioners of Woods receive about £30,000 annually in the shape of quit rents on land in Ireland.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, if any part of the purchase money for the estate recently acquired for the purposes of afforestation will be paid during the present financial year.

MR. J. A. PEASE: The whole of the purchase money was paid last November.

LORD BALCARRES asked on what Vote this money appeared.

MR. J. A. PEASE replied that there was no specific Vote in connection with this matter, but if any hon. Member desired to call in question the policy he could do so on the salaries of Ministers.

LORD BALCARRES: The money has been paid. On what Vote does it appear?

MR. J. A. PEASE: The money has been paid by the Woods and Forests Department. It is a matter of administration.

MR. BOWLES (Lambeth, Norwood): Then has the money been spent without the authority of Parliament?

MR. J. A. PEASE: I understand that is so. £25,000 was the money required for the purchase of the estate, and that has been spent without any direct Vote in Supply.

Lancashire Magistracy.

MR. TYSON WILSON: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster whether he can state how many persons were appointed county magistrates for the county of Lancaster during the year 1907; and how many of those appointed were working men.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY OF LANCASTER (Sir HENRY FOWLER, Wolverhampton, E.): In the years 1906 and 1907 there have been 449 new magistrates appointed for the county and boroughs of Lancashire, viz., 147 for the county, and 302 for the boroughs. The total number appointed in the five preceding years was 700. I am not able to classify the occupations of the magistrates who have been appointed.

MR. BELLOC (Salford, S.): Has it been the invariable practice not to nominate as county magistrates gentlemen already appointed as borough justices?

*SIR HENRY FOWLER: Yes, I consider it undesirable that the two should be combined. Where a man is on the borough bench there is no reason why he should be put on the county bench. If the office is regarded as an honour it should be distributed, and if as a responsible duty, the duty should be divided among as large a number of gentlemen as desirable.

MR. CORRIE GRANT: But is it not sometimes desirable to have a county magistrate in a borough to whom officials may go when they want documents signed or summonses issued?

*SIR HENRY FOWLER: I have given the question my best consideration, and I think the balance of argument is against one man holding the two offices.

Scottish University Professors.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, College): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he is aware that the salaries of several professors of Scottish universities are paid out of Parliamentary grants, and that these professors are subject to religious tests before being appointed; and whether he will introduce legislation making these public appointments of teachers open to all, irrespective of the Church to which the applicants belong.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): My hon. friend was good enough to draw my attention to this subject last session; but I am not able to give any undertaking as to legislation.

Evicted Tenants in County Clare.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many evicted tenants have been restored to holdings in county Clare up to the end of 1907; and how many evicted tenants remain to be dealt with in the same county.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): Up to 31st December, 1907, the number of evicted tenants in County Clare who had been reinstated in their former holdings or provided with new holdings, was eighty; and the number remaining for whom the Estates Commissioners propose to provide holdings, if possible, is fifty-nine.

County Down Polling Districts.

MR. J. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the attention of the Local Government Board has been called to the resolutions adopted by the county council of county Down in August, 1903, and again in December, 1907, urging that the Parliamentary polling districts should be remodelled so as to make them coterminous with the electoral divisions and that such a change would effect a saving to the county funds, besides facilitating the preparation and revision of the lists of voters; whether the Local Government Board has also considered the suggestion of the same body that powers should be given to the county councils to have the register of voters made out alphabetically in townlands, or, as regards urban districts, in streets, where the county council may consider that course necessary or desirable; and whether he will undertake to introduce a Bill to give effect to these recommendations or give facilities for a private Member's Bill on the subject.

MR. BIRRELL: The Local Government Board have no powers in regard to the division of Parliamentary counties or boroughs into polling districts. The attention of the Irish Government has, however, been directed to the resolutions referred to in the Question. The boundaries of Parliamentary counties in Ireland are based upon the boundaries of baronies, half-baronies, and parishes, which areas are no longer administrative units for any purpose of local government. The administrative units are the district electoral divisions, and these are not coterminous with any of the areas mentioned. It would be very difficult if not impossible, to carry out any general provision by Statute to the effect that Parliamentary polling districts should always be coterminous with district electoral divisions or groups of divisions. It often happens that an alteration of one or more of such divisions is an administrative necessity, and upon every such change it would be necessary to make corresponding alterations in the Parliamentary polling districts. The inconvenience thus caused would probably outweigh any advantage which might attend the adoption of the first of the county council's suggestions. The second proposal relates to a matter which does not appear to be of first importance, and I am not aware that any very useful purpose would be served by its adoption. It will, however, receive consideration. I do not, as at present advised, propose to introduce a Bill to give effect to the recommendations, nor can I promise facilities for a private Member's Bill.

MR. CORRIE GRANT asked if it was not possible to follow the precedent set in regard to London and appoint boundary Commissioners to inquire and report on any possible readjustment?

MR. BIRRELL: I will consider that proposal, but I am very much occupied at the present time.

Singleton Estate (Cork) Evicted Tenants.

MR. SHEEHAN (Cork County, Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, on reconsideration by the Estates Commissioners, the claim of John R. O'Sullivan, evicted tenant on the Lady Singleton estate, county Cork, has been admitted; and, if so, whether steps are being taken under the provisions of the Evicted Tenants Act, to provide him with a suitable holding.

MR. BIRRELL: This evicted tenant's application for reinstatement is at present under reconsideration by the Estates Commissioners.

Royal Commission on the Feeble-Minded.

MR. WEDGWOOD: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can say when the Report of the Royal Commission on the Feeble-Minded will be issued.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): The Chairman of the Royal Commission informs me that the Report of the Commission, which is in an advanced condition, has recently been delayed by unforeseen circumstances; but it is confidently hoped that it will be completed before Easter.

Anticipatory Motions.

MR. BOWLES asked the Prime Minister when he proposed to introduce the Amendments to Standing Orders with regard to blocking Motions.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: They will be taken when it is ascertained that they will be unopposed.

LORD ROBERT CECIL (Marylebone, E.): Has the right hon. Gentleman asked the Patronage Secretary if he intends to oppose them.

[No Answer was returned.]

NEW BILL.

HOURS OF LABOUR BILL.

"To restrict the Hours of Labour in all trades and industries to eight per day," presented by Mr. Thorne; suported by Mr. Steadman, Mr. Parker, Mr. Clynes, Mr. Tyson Wilson, Mr. Glover, Mr. Gill, Mr. George Roberts, Mr. Walsh, and Mr. Curran; to be read a second time upon Friday, 1st May, and to be printed. [Bill 70.]

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee,)

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham), in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1907-8.

CLASS III.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £2,500, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1908, for Criminal Prosecutions and other Law Charges in Ireland."

MR. WALTER LONG (Dublin, S.) said that one day last week his noble friend the Member for the Chorley Division asked a Question of the Chief Secretary in regard to the Vote for which a Supplementary Vote was now asked, and the answer given had caused him and those who worked with him some little trouble, because it was very difficult to identify the statements made in the reply with the figures to be found in the Estimates. The Question was "What had been the expenditure for law charges in Ireland under the sub-head 'Fees to law officers and fees to counsel,'" and the Chief Secretary's reply included the statement that fees to law officers amounted to £7,000. He could not find in the Estimates those figures at all. He found that the fees to law officers in the Estimates stood at the sum of £1,000, and that the £7,000 was found in the Estimates as fees to counsel. That was a totally different question altogether, and was included in his noble friend's Question, but was not replied to, and he hoped that they would have an explanation of this discrepancy. But that was not really the serious aspect of the Supplementary Vote. The Government the other day took part in a debate initiated to call attention to the condition of affairs in Ireland, and they declared through the mouth of the Chief Secretary, the law officers and others, that everything was fairly satisfactory and much better than it had been. It was a most remarkable fact that in face of these declarations for the first time for many years the Irish Executive had to come forward and ask for a Supplementary Vote in respect of law charges for expenses incurred in connection with criminal prosecutions, and also in regard to the police. Not only was the Estimate which the Government made for this particular purpose proved to be insufficient, not only was the £1,000 proved to be altogether inadequate, but the Government now had to come to the House of Commons and ask for a Supplementary Vote of £2,500. He believed he was right in saying that this particular sub-head of the Vote was created in 1879–80, and he thought that he was also right in saying—and he challenged the Chief Secretary to contradict him—that since 1879–80 there had been no equal to the sum now expended; he found that the average for the ten years ending March 31st, 1906, for all but eight or nine months of which the Unionist Government were in power, and practically prepared the Estimates, was only £886 on the Appropriation Account. That was more eloquent than the speeches of Gentlemen opposite in regard to the results of their administration, when they asked them to accept their simple statement that the condition of things was all that could be desired, and that all it caused was a certain amount of anxiety. When they found that the first result of the tenure of office of the Party opposite was to increase the law charges so that they had to come to Parliament for an extra Vote, they were justified in saying that here again, as in the statistics produced the other day, there was far more powerful and eloquent testimony to be found in support of their contention than in any of the arguments produced by the Government. He was aware of the fact that a few years ago additions were made to this vote in respect of the Public Works Department, and that that amounted to about £12,000 a year, and that had to be taken out altogether in comparing the figures, which he had done. Under the whole Vote there had been unexpended in the year 1902–3 £6,500, the next year £8,400, the next year £6,000, and the next year £1,100. This year there was nothing to surrender, because everything had been expended, and in addition to that the Government as a result of the policy of conciliation had to come and ask for more money. The last thing he would do was to oppose the Government in an honest endeavour to secure justice and enforce the law; but did this represent expenditure which had been honestly incurred in such an endeavour? The result of this money paid to law officers for State prosecutions were two convictions involving eight persons. The other day, in the debate, the Solicitor-General stated—and he listened with amazement, because it came from one of the law officers speaking with all the authority and responsibility of his office—that the Government in making these prosecutions had found that the real difficulty which confronted them was due to the statements made by Members of the Opposition that the Government were in sympathy with the offence of cattle driving. He had read the references to these trials in several Irish papers, but he did not remember having read one single statement by counsel representing the people prosecuted to the effect described by the Solicitor General. He did remember a statement made by counsel to a very different effect, viz., that these prosecutions were a sham, and that there was no reality in them. He had made it his business to look up the reports of these cases, and he would take one statement alone. He did not think the Chief Secretary or the Attorney-General would attempt to argue that it was an exceptional statement or in any way inaccurate. On November 25th, in the Nisi Prius Court before Justice Wright, Mr. Macdermott acting for the accused, said—

> "If the Attorney-General said, like Mr. Birrell, that these practices were reprehensible, perhaps they were, but they were not illegal. If cattle-driving was illegal, where were the men of education and position, and where were the Members of Parliament, who, on every platform throughout Galway, month after month and week after week, advocated this form of agitation? They were told that the Irish Executive itched to prosecute members of this great political party, but the same Executive in fact prosecuted five farmers in the West of Ireland, who had no criminal intention, but who were endeavouring to undo the work of devastation done in the county in the past. He asked the jury to come to the conclusion that these people were gilty of no crime. They would be lending themselves to do the dirty work of other people if they found any other verdict than not guilty."

That was the language of a counsel defending these people, who they knew from his distinguished reputation would have used the best arguments he could command in defence, and if he could have brought home to the Opposition the charge made by the Solicitor-General, that it was due to their misrepresentations, he was sure he would very gladly and properly have done so, but he made no reference to it. It was never referred to until the Solicitor-General spoke on behalf of the Government, and he hoped they would have some further justification for such a charge, for which there was not a shadow of foundation. This expenditure of public money had been absolutely wasted, and he was convinced that Mr. Macdermott represented the views of the great majority of the people in Ireland and other parts of the United Kingdom when he said that if they were going to embark on the expensive and laborious process of State prosecutions, surely in common justice and fairness they should prosecute all those who came under the charge, whatever might be their position in life or in Ireland in regard either to a political or any other movement. The Chief Secretary told them in his speech that his fingers itched to prosecute one Member of Parliament, who had since been sent to prison. He did not know what the sensation of itching fingers might be, but he was perfectly certain of this, that whatever may have been the condition of the Chief Secretary's fingers, his hands were paralysed. If he and the Government had intended to make these prosecutions real they would have prosecuted all concerned in the offences, regardless of individuals and the position they held in the world. They prosecuted these farmers from the West of Ireland, these farm labourers, these lads, and the juries acquitted them or disagreed; and could anybody blame the juries? They knew very well that in this country it was a difficult thing, in a case where popular opinion was largely aroused, for a jury to give a verdict against that popular feeling, but it was far more serious and difficult in Ireland, for a juryman, if he found a verdict contrary to popular opinion, was likely to find himself an unpopular person, which probably meant social ostracism and might mean that the man and his wife and family could not get even the necessaries of life. The Chief Secretary when he took office talked of boycotting, and told the House that he knew something of boycotting, the boycotting of Nonconformists in Church of England parishes. He thought the Chief Secretary's language about boycotting now would be very different from what it was then. He did not think now he would get up in the House and compare boycotting in a county in the West of Ireland with boycotting of Nonconformists in an English parish where there was a vast majority of Church of England people. The responsibility for the ridiculous results of those State prosecutions rested solely with the Government counsel, for those who prosecuted put the whole case in the words he had just read to the House. If they had intended that this public money should result in something practical, the Government would have taken steps very different from those they did adopt. He was in this difficulty, that it was not part of their policy to interfere with the Government in the fearless discharge of their duty for the maintenance of order, and, therefore, he had not thought it right to put down an Amendment to reduce this Vote; but he did not hesitate to say that this money had been wasted in a profligate manner owing to the want of courage and determination on the part of the Government. The prosecutions had failed, not because there was no evidence, but because the Government had failed to carry them through with courage and determination, and it was a remarkable fact that for the first time they should have a Supplementary Estimate in regard to these law expenses, and that at the same time they should have the results he had described, unsatisfactory in themselves if one compared them with the expenditure, and ten times more unsatisfactory if one judged of them by the effect they must have had on the people and on the maintenance of law and peace in that country.

*THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. CHERRY, Liverpool, Exchange) said that with reference to the first question of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Dublin he would reply as well as he could, and explain the discrepancy in the figures. The answer which the Chief Secretary had given the other day in reference to the amounts spent on law officers' salaries related to the salaries of the law officers. The Supplementary Estimate which they were now discussing was for fees.

SIR E. CARSON (Dublin University): The Question was about fees and not salaries.

*MR. CHERRY said the Question might have been misinterpreted as well as the answer, but he had the return, and the figures had reference to the salaries of the law officers and not to fees.

MR. WALTER LONG: Here is a copy of the answer given by the Chief Secretary. It says—

> "Fees to law officers, voted £7,000, expended £5,740. General law expenses, etc."

*MR. CHERRY said that must have been a mistake. Those were the salaries and not the fees. He thought the right hon. Gentleman only wished for an explanation of an answer which was certainly a little misleading. The real question was the important one as regarded the increase in the expenses for these prosecutions, and the fact that a larger sum was asked for now than in previous years, and the fact that for the first time for some years a Supplementary Estimate was asked for. That was, he admitted, perfectly true, but he would like to draw the attention of the House to the fact that the general expenses for law charges had been continually reduced for twenty-five years, and were brought down last year and the year before to a lower figure by many thousands than they had been for a long time. In 1881–1882 the total amount voted for law charges was £105,669. In the following year, which was the largest on record, they rose to £126,396. They then came steadily down to £70,000 in 1893–1894. They came down in 1900 to £68,000, and rose in the following year to £70,000. In 1902–1903 they were £68,517; in 1903–1904, £68,600; in 1904–1905 £65,416; in 1905–1906, £64,416; in 1906–1907 £62,652; and for the present year the original estimate was £62,875. So that, with the exception of last year, the sum was smaller by several thousands than any sum voted in previous years.

SIR E. CARSON: What were the figures for 1898–1899?

*MR. CHERRY: The figures were small that year—£62,660.

SIR E. CARSON: Is not that less than last year?

*MR. CHERRY said it was, but the following year, 1899–1900, they rose to £67,000. The total amount voted for the present year including the Supplementary Estimate would amount to £65,224, and that was actually less than for the year 1904–1905. In addition to this, several additional charges had been put in recent years upon the Vote for Law Charges that were not on before. In 1889 the expenditure of the legal department of the Board of Works, £3,500 a year, was added to the Vote, and considerable expenditure in connection with legal department of the War Department. In 1899 an addition of £8,400 was made to the Vote for the High Sheriffs' expenses of receiving Judges of Assize. These sums amounted to £12,000 a year, and in addition to that, in 1901 the law expenses of the Department of Agriculture were added to the Vote. He had not the figures but they amounted to a very considerable sum, for the Agricultural Department carried on business all over Ireland, and was constantly involved in disputes which led to legal expenses. He thought it would be reasonable to assume that they would not be less than £1,000 or £2,000 a year. There had been added since 1889 at least £13,000, probably £14,000, which were not charged upon the Vote before. If they deducted that from the total amount of the Vote for this year they would bring it down to very nearly £50,000 as compared with over £100,000 twenty-five years ago. No doubt there had been more expended in the last year than in previous years, and in view of what had been said as to the terribly disturbed condition of the country it was only natural that there should be. He had always admitted that there were some portions of Ireland in a disturbed condition, which gave very great trouble. In addition to that, when they changed the venue in criminal cases an immense amount deal of additional expense was incurred. They had been blamed for proceeding against these men in the way they had done. He supposed the only alternative was to put in force the Crimes Act, but he did not think that had been suggested by the right hon. Gentlemen opposite, at all events without giving the jury system a trial. Whether they were right in persisting in it as long as they did was another question. He thought that they were, and that the results had justified their action. Whether they succeeded in getting convictions or not cattle-driving had died down, and he held it was due to the prosecutions. He held that the calling of public attention to the circumstances of the individual cases by trying them in the ordinary way before an ordinary tribunal had a very considerable effect in inducing the people of the districts to use their own influence to put a stop to cattle-driving. Nobody seriously doubted that the number of cases and the number of persons concerned had very greatly diminished. Cattle-driving was a very easy thing to do. One or two men could open a gate and turn the cattle out of a field. With reference to the Solicitor General's speech, his recollection of what his hon. friend had said was that the difficulties of the Government in regard to cattle-driving had been greatly increased by the fact that Members of the Opposition were stating that the Government were encouraging rather than discouraging it. There was no doubt that some people concerned in cattle-driving thought the Government were encouraging it, and public speeches in which that accusation was made, and which were published all over Ireland, must have had a very great effect in encouraging the very thing they wanted to stop. He thought hon. Gentlemen opposite had not really given them the help they might reasonably have claimed from them. It must be obvious to anyone that whether they were right or wrong in not prosecuting Members of Parliament, they were not wrong in prosecuting the men who actually took part in the drives. In the cases which had been referred to they prosecuted every person they could identify as having actually taken part in the driving of cattle. They did not prosecute any Members of Parliament who merely made speeches encouraging cattle-driving. The right hon. Gentleman said that they prosecuted one particular Member, but that was not so. One of the Judges of the Chancery Division exercising his power of committal for contempt of court had put an hon. Member into gaol for six months, but the Government had nothing to do with that. He did not think that that had had much effect upon cattle-driving, and it should not be overlooked that the most serious cases of cattle-driving were not in the hon. Member's county at all. The right hon. Gentleman also referred to the subject of boycotting, and spoke of its serious character. As a matter of fact there was very little serious boycotting in Ireland now.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Oh, oh.

*Mr. CHERRY said he would read a report for the East Riding of Galway made by the county inpector in the month of October. He stated that there was no really serious boycotting in the Riding. There were a good many unpopular people who were boycotted to the extent of being unable to get work done locally and some were boycotted in the local shops; but they all contrived in some way to get what they required.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): Will the right hon. Gentleman, in accordance with the invariable practice, lay the document from which he has just read upon the Table of the House.

*Mr. CHERRY: Certainly. It was agreed that it was most difficult to stop boycotting by prosecutions, in fact, it was almost impossible, because prosecutions stirred up feelings against individuals and embittered them. In many cases the persons boycotted were most anxious that prosecutions should not be undertaken because the evil was only increased thereby.

*Mr. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.) said these Supplementary Estimates had been rendered necessary by the numerous cases that came before the Courts in one way or another in connection with cattle-driving, and it was to the attempts of the Government to deal with this crime that he intended to confine his remarks. On Tuesday last the Attorney-General and the Chief Secretary declared that they had considerable difficulty in knowing what the nature of the charge was which the Opposition brought against the Irish Government. This debate would afford them another opportunity of making that point clear. The charge which they made was that the so-called prosecutions against persons charged with cattle-driving were undertaken at a time and under circumstances when the Attorney-General and the Chief Secretary must have known that they would be futile and the money spent on them would be thrown away. The Solicitor-General acknowledged that the state of affairs existing in Ireland was a serious one and he asked what were the Government to do under the circumstances? That was not a question for the Opposition to answer. The Government had created the situation themselves, and it was their duty to solve it. They had failed to find a way out of the difficulty and they had handled the question in the worst possible way. Instead of showing a firm front in the early stages of cattle-driving, the Government led those engaged in it to believe that they did not look upon it as a serious offence, and four or five Members of the Government made speeches which he maintained could not be taken to mean anything else than that the Government did not intend to take any serious cognisance of this crime. The Solicitor-General tried to put the blame upon the shoulders of his political opponents for having created the present situation by their speeches. After having heard the declarations of his own colleagues on so many occasions that cattle-driving was not a serious offence and ought not to be treated seriously, the Solicitor-General had the effrontery to turn round and declare that it was his political opponents who had placed the Government in this difficulty. The Attorney-General claimed that cattle-driving had decreased and that the publicity given to the question by his prosecutions had caused that decrease. And yet the Opposition had been frequently blamed for giving publicity to cattle-driving cases by bringing them before the notice of the House of Commons and the country. They were all familiar with the name which the Chief Secretary thought fit to call the Unionist Members from Ireland in April last, for bringing before the House of Commons each case of cattle-driving as it occurred. Now the Attorney-General was claiming credit for stopping cattle-driving, by that same publicity which was a crime six months ago when brought about by a Unionist Member. To say the least of it, such language was highly inconsistent. They must, however, judge this matter by results. What had been the result of the legal proceedings instituted by the Attorney-General? There had been 572 persons proceeded against for cattle-driving, and out of that number only five were convicted. No amount of talk could prove more conclusively than that fact the absolute futility and ridiculousness of those prosecutions. What had all the mild remonstrance against cattle-driving which had lately been indulged in by members of the Government accomplished? Only five convictions out of 572 cases. Probably the Chief Secretary would reply that in 288 of these cases the defendants were ordered to find bail, but he did not see how he could get much comfort out of that. In a great many cases each individual man only took part or wanted to take part in one cattle-drive, after which he would wait until the Estates Commissioners divided the estate up, and then he would get his share. In the 136 cases in which proceedings were taken by indictment, five were convicted, twenty-seven were acquitted, and in 104 cases the jury disagreed. The right hon. Gentleman said the Opposition were responsible for these proceedings.

*Mr. CHERRY: I do not think I said that.

*Mr. CHARLES CRAIG said that, at any rate, the Attorney-General claimed that the greater share of the blame of having rendered these proceedings necessary belonged to his political opponents in Ireland. That was a most absurd contention. During the whole of last session when a debate took place here or another place on the state of Ireland the same sort of reply was made by Ministers of the Crown. On each and every occasion the Minister who spoke for the Government, while admitting that technically speaking cattle-drives were breaches of the law, proceeded to point out extenuating circumstances.

Attention called to the fact that forty Members were not present. House counted, and forty Members being found present—

*Mr. CHARLES CRAIG said the Minister who replied for the Government invariably proceeded to state extenuating circumstances and to excuse the persons who had taken part in the drives. On one occasion the Chief Secretary, when making the usual extenuating speech, said the House must remember that these cases were not "predatory" but only "intimidatory," and that the House should take that into consideration.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Birrell, Bristol, N.): It was not an excuse.

*Mr. CHARLES CRAIG said it was certainly put forward as something in the nature of an excuse or at least as a fact that ought to be taken into account to minimise the degree of the offence. The Government had shown in regard to cattle-driving their unwillingness or their inability to deal with it. From beginning to end the Government had shown to the people of Ireland that they were not prepared to take the serious view of the situation that Unionist Members said they ought to take, and it was perfectly ridiculous, after the results of the last summer assizes, to come to the House and ask for money for law proceedings, when they had not the least chance of obtaining convictions. The Attorney-General had read a report of an inspector from the county of Galway saying there was practically no serious cases of boycotting in that part of Galway to which the report referred. Well, he did not think that amounted to very much. They did not know what the inspector meant by serious boycotting, but fortunately they had some idea of what the Chief Secretary's idea of boycotting was. In the early part of last year the right hon. Gentleman speaking in the debate on an Amendment to the Address said—

> "Boycotting is limited, I should say, at the most to a score of cases—any boycotting to which the term 'savage' can be applied. As to exclusive dealing, as to cutting people, I know enough of village Nonconformity to say that if a microscopic eye was focussed on our villages as it is focussed on the villages of Ireland, we should have a record too of that method of exclusive dealing which I deplore and deprecate, but is too often almost inevitable when feeling runs high."

All he could say was that if that was the right hon. Gentleman's idea of boycotting of the second class in Ireland he was grievously mistaken. The Report which the Attorney-General read bore him out in that statement, for the county inspector said there was practically no serious boycotting, and then proceeded to tell what class of boycotting did exist. The county inspector pointed out that there were many persons in that part of Galway who found it difficult to get men to work for them, and who found it difficult to get food for themselves and their families, but that those people got hold somehow of the necessaries of life.

MR. CHERRY: Got in some way what they required.

*MR. CHARLES CRAIG said he thought he had paraphrased the words of the right hon. Member correctly. He asked the Attorney-General whether he could show a single case throughout England, Wales, or Scotland where such a state of things existed as was described in the county inspector's report. He did not agree with the Chief Secretary that these cases were few and far between. Only the other day he was informed that a person in another part of Ireland, who had suffered very seriously in past years from boycotting, recently sent a confidential agent of his into Roscommon, Galway, and other parts of the country to find out what was the true state of affairs. That gentleman returned and said that cattle-drivings were very frequent, but as a rule they were carried out in a more or less good-humoured way because the people had long ago come to the conclusion that there was not the slightest use in attempting to prevent it, but that with regard to boycotting, in the whole of his experience he had never see boycotting of the same cruel and relentless nature as existed at the present time. In the old days children were left out, but that was not the case to-day. He did not mean to say that there were so many cases at the present time, but where it existed it was of a more cruel and relentless nature. [A NATIONALIST MEMBER: Who was the agent? Was he an agent of Lord Ashtown?] No, Lord Ashtown unfortunately lived in the most disturbed part of Ireland, so there was no need for him to send an agent to another part to find out what boycotting and intimidation was like. He asserted that it was bad policy for the Chief Secretary and Attorney-General to come down to the House and minimise boycotting. It was not presenting the matter in its true colours. Such a matter ought to cause grave anxiety to the Government and their first duty was to communicate that anxiety to the House instead of trying to minimise and excuse the matter.

*MR. JOHN ROCHE (Galway, E.) said he would not occupy the time of the House by referring to more than one case which, he thought, would illustrate why Nationalist Members complained of the manner in which cases were conducted by Dublin Castle methods. The case to which he referred occurred quite recently in the constituency he had the honour to represent. On September 2nd last he received a wire from a constituent who lived at Woodlawn, better known as the residence of Lord Ashtown, a gentleman who appealed for funds to carry on a journal which was edited by him, and was called *Grievances from Ireland*. The wire contained an inquiry whether he was at home, and he replied in the affirmative. In the evening three of his constituents arrived at his place, having travelled twenty-one Irish miles. The object of their mission was to submit to him three anonymous letters which they had received on the morning of August 31st. The substance of these was that those men were requested to go to the church at Woodlawn at eleven o'clock at night and assist in placing a bomb under the church, for doing which they were to be handsomely rewarded by considerable sums of money. He got those letters and requested the people who received them not to say anything about the matter at present. On the next day he wrote to the county inspector at Ballinasloe requesting an interview, which he granted, and the inspector came immediately to his place at Woodford. He laid the letters before the inspector, and told him that the people who received them were under the impression that this was a plot to entrap them into the perpetration of a proposed outrage. He would only read one of the letters which was typical of all the others. He might mention that five different persons in his constituency were written to and not one of them had the most remote notion or idea that any second person had been written to, so that if any of them had responded to the appeal and gone to the church at eleven o'clock on that Saturday night the object of the originators of the plot would have been accomplished. I will now read to the House a letter which was addressed to a man named Mahon and was headed "United Irish League"—

> "Dear Mahon,—If you are as we think a true Catholic and Irishman with the welfare of your religion and country at heart and a faithful member of our Land League, and if you are willing to do a little work for the same we will give you £50 in hand and £50 more in monthly instalments. The cowardly cruel evictor that is the curse of our country will be going in a few days to foreign parts; now or never is the time to nail him; we won't fail this time like we did in Waterford."
>
> "We have a man that's well used to the work to blow him up while he is praying to his friend the devil in church next Sunday and send him home to hell sure and certain. It will be done in such a way that the costs won't be heavy, but the man is a stranger and as you know none of the rotten supers round Woodlawn can be trusted, we want you to show him the right place to bury the pot. We are told that his pew is under the stained window that faces the gate close to the headstone; that's the spot to put the bomb; be sure of the right place. All you have to do is to be at the church at eleven o'clock to the minute next Saturday night; don't go before the time as the shorter you are on the ground the safer for yourself and be sure to avoid the blasted peelers on the way, but there will be no risk as they will be all on guard at the big house and will never dream of the church. The man will be there at eleven; if you arrive at the window first give a very low whistle and when he appears say 'Franuawail.' If he is there first he will say the same word to you; ask no questions, but just point out the spot. Give him a small bottle of paraffin oil, which you must bring with you in your pocket; about a half-pint bottle, that will make no bulk in your pocket, for fear you might meet any of the patrols on the road going. If the man does not join you at the church window at once, don't wait longer than five minutes, as it would be too dangerous to make any delays, but just place the bottle of paraffin oil on the right spot and the man will know. If he asks your name say it is Fahy; he is a stranger and will be leaving the country at once, so you need not be afraid of him, but if you like you can bring a mask and put it on when you get inside the church ground; a piece of cloth with the eyes and mouth cut out would do. For God's sake, Tom, be careful; don't walk on the grass if it is wet, but keep on the gravel if you can. You ought to get the loan of someone's boots. You will meet a friend at the cross roads going back, and will hand you five £10 notes; don't delay a minute with him, but hurry home. If you are afraid, Tom, to go alone, you can bring another man with you, but be sure he is one that can be relied on, for remember, Tom, if this secret is let out, as sure as God is above your life will be taken. If you bring a man with you we will give you ten pounds for him, but we would rather you went alone as the less that know the secret the better. If you are afraid to do this little job yourself, Tom, send a true man that won't fail and he will get the same money; but don't fail if you can't go yourself to send someone, or the man might put the bomb under a wrong window and we would miss our mark a second time. If we hear he has left Woodlawn before Saturday we will let you know. We are sending this for safety to a friend to post far away, and think it safer not to sign our names. God be with you.
>
> If you tie two old cloths over your boots before you cross the church wall, you won't leave any footprints, as that is the only danger. Tom, for the good of your father and mother and brothers' souls, don't let out this secret, for if you do you will be killed as dead as a maggot; but if you are true to us you will never see a poor day. If you can get a bit of fusee without rousing suspicion, bring it with you. A groom will post this letter for safety on his way to the horse show."

He might mention in passing that the letters those five different persons received were each and every one of them posted in Dublin. At the interview with the county inspector on 5th September, five days after the attack on the church was to take place, he told the inspector that those people were under the impression that this was a plot got up in the interest of the editor of *Grievances from Ireland*; that he thoroughly agreed with that view; and that if that was correct either of two things should have occurred. In the first place, if the editor of *Grievances from Ireland* had anything to do with the plot, either he or his servants were at the church to receive the people who were invited to go there; or that the police were there—and there by his direction—on the night in question; and he trusted that the inspector would be able to clear up those two points. And he further added that if neither of those two things had occurred he was thoroughly convinced that Lord Ashtown was in no way connected with the plot. The county inspector was a bit sceptical at their first interview and gave him no information upon that point. He assumed that the inspector at once got into communication with the Castle. The next time he heard about the matter he was informed that the inspector had thoroughly satisfied himself that he knew who had written the letters, though the inspector did not tell him who. He told him, however, that he had sent the original letters to Dublin, to be submitted to an expert, but up to that time he had not received a reply. Afterwards the inspector informed him that on the night of the 31st, he and four police had been at the church all night waiting to receive those unfortunate people of his, if any of them had been foolish enough to respond to the appeal that had been made to them. Furthermore, what happened? Those letters were written and posted in Dublin, and during the time they were written and posted in Dublin Lord Ashtown was there and left Dublin on the Saturday morning, the 31st, for Woodlawn; but before he left he communicated with the police in Dublin and told them that he expected there would be an attack made on the church that night and requested that the police should be sent to receive the men who were invited there to commit the outrage. The precaution was taken that none of the local police should be trusted, lest they might give the case away to the enemy; men were brought therefore from an outlying district, and he was told that they had to tramp four miles, through the fields rather than trust the local men, in order to get to the church that night. However the plot did not come off. Now the important point was that while these letters were written and posted in Dublin, inviting these five persons to the church that night, Lord Ashtown at the same time was inviting the police to be there to receive them. That had been proved beyond any shadow of doubt. The next thing he heard about it was two days before the police court proceedings. He was informed by the county inspector that the proceedings were about to be taken in the Police Court, Dublin, and he asked him to attend. He went there and he might mention that he was never more amazed in his life than at the manner in which that case was presented by the Crown. How did the Crown present the case? They shoved this criminal conspiracy into the background, and the ostensible charge made was that this woman was being prosecuted by Lord Ashtown for obtaining money by false pretences; and while that was so, Lord Ashtown and his agent in the witness box, and upon their oaths, repudiated any connection whatever with the prosecution and the statement that the woman ever obtained money by false pretences. But the real point was this. When the county inspector on 12th September went to Lord Ashtown and told him—

> "I, by your instruction, had police at the church at eleven o'clock on Saturday night, the 31st August, when you said that an attack was to be made upon it. Since then I have received letters, written to four or five differen persons, inviting them to go to the church that night and lay the bomb in the right position. They did not go there, but they have given me the letters, and now I want to know from you on what authority did you at the same time invite the police to be there,"

it was not good enough for Lord Ashtown to refuse to give his authority; neither would it do for him to say, as he did in regard to another letter, that he had lost it; because even if it was an anonymous letter it was one of such importance, and as it was only a week or ten days afterwards when he was asked about it, it would not do to say that he had lost it; and then, when his back was to the wall, he gave away this unfortunate dupe of his, and by some legerdemain got the Crown and Dublin Castle, which were in reality the same thing, to prosecute, not for writing these letters to these people, but for obtaining money under false pretences, a charge which the very persons who were said to have made it repudiated on oath. The sole object was to allow Lord Ashtown to ride out of the corner he would have been in if the case had been honestly dealt with. He was for two days in the police court; he demanded to be put into the box, but was not; in addition from the day he gave the letters to the county inspector, 5th September, up to the present moment, he was never asked either in public or in private one solitary word on the part of the Crown as to what information he had or could give. The county inspector who took up the case and put the proceedings in motion, was the whole day in the police court on the first day without the slightest reference being made to his action in the matter, and after that day's proceedings the outside public knew no more about the real origin of the case than the chairman did at the time. The inspector attended on the second day of trial at the police court, and the last witness was put up and asked one or two questions. In addition to these facts he might add that not later than Thursday last he received a wire from Dublin Castle saying that he was not required at the trial which took place on Friday last. They heard a great deal about respect for law and order in Ireland, but to use a famous expression of the late Prime Minister, "There is a limit to human endurance," and after experience such as they had had in Ireland it was certain that there could be very little respect for law and order there while so administered. They also heard a good deal about boycotting, of which he had some experience. His business, and that of his father before him, was that of a miller. In a radius of six or seven miles from where he lived there were about seven or eight resident landlords, and up to 1879 when the late Michael Davitt started the Land League there was not a single one of them who did not do more or less business at his place, and with his father before him. But he could assure the House that since the day he took an active part in the promotion of the Land League, up to the present moment, not a solitary one of them had ever entered the mill gate. He made no complaint. He was proud of it, but he failed to see why these gentlemen should come whining to this House, when they paid them back with a little of their own coin. He did not come there to whine, but he thought they were certainly justified in referring to the policy adopted by their enemies when they were in power, and when they would crush them if they dared.

Mr. GEORGE CLARK (Belfast, N.) said that, representing as he did one of the divisions of Belfast, the commercial capital of Ireland and the city which only within the last few months suffered so severely, both in trade and in reputation, from the lawlessness and disorder that were allowed to exist there owing to the feebleness of the present Administration, he would like to say a word or two upon these Estimates. They were prepared to pay for justice in Ireland, but when they did so, they expected to get it, and he would like to let the House know what sort of justice they had been getting in Belfast. He asked the Attorney-General for Ireland the other day whether he was going to prosecute a man named James Larkin, who was tried at Dublin before a Dublin jury who disagreed. He was surprised that the Attorney-General told him that he was not going to prosecute, and he could only say that that statement would be received with great astonishment by the people in Belfast, because everyone there, at least the law-abiding and respectable class of people in the city, were convinced that this man ought to stand another trial and ought to get a fair one. In connection with this might he say that he received a letter from a gentleman in Belfast who wrote about some information which he had obtained with reference to the jury who sat on this case in Dublin. His correspondent said that one of the jurymen was a partner in business in Dublin with one of his sons, and that that juror stated that another member of the jury, when in the hotel to which they were sent for the night, was allowed by the police in charge to leave the room and to remain away from the other jurors for about two hours. Next day when they were considering their verdict, this man held out against the other eleven who desired to bring in a verdict of guilty; hence the disagreement. To allow Larkin to go free without any further trial after this fact the writer of the letter said was beyond comprehension. [Cries of "Name." An Hon. Member: It is no use without the name. Another Hon. Member: We will take [it for what it is worth.] He was bringing this matter before the House of Commons, as he had a right to. Another matter worthy of the attention of the authorities was that while they were prosecuting this man Larkin, he was appointed by the Home Secretary a member of a Departmental Committee, to consider and report on the best means of securing the working men paid by weight and measurement the correctness of the weights and measures.

*The CHAIRMAN said the question of a gentleman being appointed on a Departmental Committee by another Department had nothing to do with this debate.

Mr. GEORGE CLARK apologised for being out of order and explained that he was not acquainted with the ways of the House. He would like to bring before the House another matter with regard to the riots in Belfast. He listened very carefully to the debate on Monday and Tuesday last in connection with crime in Ireland, and he questioned some of the statements made, because he knew that if people in Ireland were asked whether they got the justice they were entitled to the invariable reply would be "no." And when this Committee was asked to pass Supplementary Estimates of this kind, he contended that the people of Ireland ought to receive the justice to which they were entitled.

*MR. J. F. MASON (Windsor) said that the reason, apparently why these sums were not included in the original Estimates was that at the time those Estimates were passed Ireland was peaceful. They had become necessary owing to the lawless state of Ireland at the present time. They included an extra £1,000 for the costs of prosecutions, and an extra £1,500 for the law officers of the Crown, and he ventured to think that these items were rendered necessary by the policy which underlay the two little words used by the Chief Secretary recently, the two words "I won't." This Supplementary Estimate had not been rendered necessary by any heroic measures, but by carrying out the ordinary law of the country. That had not only cost these extra sums, but had also cost the ratepayers something over £7,000 which, as damage for malicious injuries, had been awarded in the six months ending with January. Although he believed the Chief Secretary hated cattle-driving, nevertheless his action in the administration of the law in Ireland had without doubt been considered by the agitators in that country as an encouragement to the agitation. In the words of one hon. Member of the House who was now incarcerated in Ireland—

> "If you resort to cattle-driving the land will be yours in twelve months, and the new Land Bill will ratify your acts."

The Chief Secretary had told the Committee that he objected to make a martyr of a Member of Parliament by prosecuting him. Well, fortunately for this country, the Government had not been so particular and so careful or so afraid of making martyrs in India as in Ireland. Cattle-driving was described as "unlawful assembly" and the Government had it in their power to send cases to be tried before a tribunal of two magistrates without any stigma of coercion. It was therefore not true to say that the course which had been taken was the only one possible short of putting into force the provisions of the Crimes Act. The fact was that the Government were in a pitiful position. They dared not govern Ireland themselves because they had to consider hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, and they could not allow her to govern herself because they feared the electorate of this country.

MR. J. WARD (Stoke-on-Trent) said he thought the right hon. Gentleman was well advised in the attitude he took up with regard to Belfast. As he understood there was a temporary dispute at Belfast, and incidents occurred which were regretted by all. But it was generally admitted in this Committee that those who led the men on that occasion led them in a very cautious manner, taking it altogether, and that there had not been scenes of disorder such as sometimes disgraced incidents of that character. Notwithstanding all the bad feeling and ill-will which was excited on such occasions the men behaved extremely well. Therefore, as the dispute was over, and the man had stood his trial and the jury had disagreed, in his opinion the right hon. Gentleman was well advised to leave that matter where it was. He had been also interested in another phase of the question introduced, he believed, by the Member for East Galway. It was not usual for English Members to intervene in Irish debates, but upon this occasion he could not help thinking that if many English Members had been present, and had heard the speech of the hon. Member for East Galway, they would certainly have required some explanation from the Government. The statement of the hon. Member for East Galway was to the effect that certain men in Galway had received letters inciting them to commit sacrilege and murder. Five letters in a fairly well-known handwriting were sent. Those letters were posted in Dublin. Lord Ashtown, who had taken great trouble in tabulating these outrages, when they occurred and when they did not occur, was in Dublin at the time those letters were posted. He made some inquiries and informed the police that this outrage was going to be committed upon the date mentioned in the letter, and the police took care to have men in readiness at the place where the outrage was to take place. It seemed to him that if Lord Ashtown was in the position to tell the police where the outrage was going to take place or likely to take place and to fix the exact time, he either knew something about it or there was something about the business which required a very strict investigation. That was a point to which he, as an English Member, would like to have an answer from the Government. The explanation of the officials in Dublin wanted elucidating and clearing up. It was a very awkward position, as it appeared to him that it would be impossible for a man to ask for police protection because a certain outrage was about to take place, unless he knew something about it. He hoped they would be given some information as to whether they had tried to find out what connection Lord Ashtown and these letters had with each other. The hon. Member for East Galway had not said it was alleged that these letters were received from him. He did not know whether the Attorney General had any views upon that subject. If so he would certainly like to hear them. Unless something was done to clear up this mystery, it would seem that there was someone attempting to lead men who perhaps were not very clever, into difficulties and danger, and to entrap them into practices that they would all deplore, and he thought that for the prevention of cases of that description every effort ought to be made to investigate the charges suggested by the letters and the statements they had heard.

*Mr. CHERRY said that these were difficult matters for him to deal with as the jury had disagreed as regarded one of the persons accused of offences in connection with the matter. The boy had been acquitted, but the jury had disagreed with regard to his mother, and no determination had yet been come to as to whether there should be another trial. But as the matter had been opened and discussed it was right that he should put the House in possession of the facts as far as he could.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): Was there a disagreement upon the conspiracy counts?

*Mr. CHERRY thought that there was disagreement upon all the counts. He was rather in a difficult postion too, because he had been attacked most vigorously by both sides. He had been charged with having entered into a conspiracy with Members opposite against Lord Ashtown, and now there was a counter charge relating to some conspiracy to shield him. In the first place, he desired to take upon himself the entire responsibility of this matter. He did not think it would be at all fair to the counsel engaged in the trial that they should be in any way blamed for what had been done. Everything that had been done from first to last had been under his directions. He had endeavoured to the best of his ability to do what he considered to be his duty as regards bringing the matter forward for public investigation. The hon. Member for East Galway had not stated the whole case. Simultaneously with the anonymous letters there were letters, which were not anonymous, sent to Lord Ashtown.

*Mr. JOHN ROCHE said he had not referred to those because he would then have had to refer to the person whom he held to be the writer, and as the case was still *sub judice* he was afraid the rules of the House would not allow him to introduce the names.

*Mr. CHERRY said he thought it was only right that if they discussed the matter at all, they should discuss it fully. He was very sorry indeed that the matter had been brought forward. The letters he referred to were signed "Minnie Walsh," and in them she told Lord Ashtown and his agent that she was in a position to give information as to the perpetrator of the outrages, and that there was a second plot to commit murder. He did not think the writing of these letters had ever been denied. They were at once communicated to the police authorities. They could find nothing whatever to blame Lord Ashtown or his agent for, except that they were foolish enough to give the woman £5. He could not see the slightest ground for any suggestion that Lord Ashtown or his agent had anything to do with this business, or were in any way privy to a conspiracy to get up a bogus outrage. When the matter came forward he consulted other members of the Government and the prosecuting counsel as to what the charge should be, and they resolved that they would get expert evidence as to whether these anonymous letters were written as was suggested by Minnie Walsh or her son and that if that were so she should be put upon her trial on every charge which could be framed against her for violation of the criminal law. They wanted the whole matter and every phase of it to be investigated, and put before a jury. The hon. Member complained that he was not examined as a witness. The sole reason was that he could give no material evidence. The hon. Member had taken the letters to the county inspector, but the persons who received them were examined. The hon. Member could only have given hearsay evidence which would not have been accepted by the Court. They were charged with putting the matter of the £5 in the forefront of the indictment, but he found it was the thirteenth count in the indictment. In the forefront of the case they put the conspiracy which they thought had been entered into to create a bogus outrage. They all thought there never was any real intention on anybody's part to blow up Lord Ashtown, but that the intention was to bring these people who were really innocent to the place and get them falsely accused; and they brought before the Court those who could give evidence on that point against the woman and her son. They had absolutely no evidence with regard to the anonymous letters, except that they were posted in Dublin, and the evidence of a handwriting expert. The counts in the indictment were: soliciting Peter Kelly to murder Lord Ashtown, endeavouring to persuade Kelly to murder Lord Ashtown, proposing to Kelly to murder Lord Ashtown, soliciting Kelly to conspire to murder Lord Ashtown, soliciting Kelly to damage a building with intent to murder, soliciting Kelly to cause an explosion to the danger of life and property, soliciting Kelly to conspire to cause an explosion. These were all repeated in reference to the others; then—soliciting to conspire to damage a building, conspiracy to solicit the man to commit the crime, and at the very end of the indictment, conspiracy to obtain money by false pretences. They were bound to include that because if the woman's story was all false, and she was inventing from beginning to end, they were bound to charge her with taking the money as well as getting innocent men falsely accused. They had racked their brains getting together every possible charge, and they put everything forward. The leading counsel for the prosecution, Mr. Bushe, was the fairest man he ever came across, and to suggest that he had done anything to shield a person from justice was a most far-fetched idea. All those who were responsible for the form of the indictment were anxious to have the whole matter investigated and every circumstance of the case brought out fully. As regarded the speech of the hon. Member for North Belfast it should be entitled "Grievances from Befast." It referred to the case of a man called Larkin. During the strike in Belfast there was a row between this man Larkin and one called Bamber. Bamber had come there as what was commonlly called a "blackleg." In consequence of the row both men were arrested and put upon their trial in Belfast. The Crown Prosecutor—a Gentleman who sat on the Unionist side of the House—acted in every way quite fairly. He decided quite rightly and fairly that neither of these two men should be examined as against the other, but that the case should be based upon the evidence of the police and bystanders. As the result of the trial Bamber was acquitted in Belfast. It was suggested that in Belfast there might be some prejudice as regarded the prisoner Larkin, who was connected with the strike, and in consequence he consented to the trial being held in the county of Dublin. The hon. Member for North Belfast had stated that he had received a letter alleging that the policeman in charge of the jury had allowed one of the jurors to leave for two hours. That was a very great dereliction of duty and ought to have been investigated. The House was, however, left in ignorance as to who wrote the letter.

MR. GEORGE CLARK: I will give the letter to the right hon. Gentleman.

*MR. CHERRY said he would have preferred that the hon. Member had communicated the letter to the authorities at the time. If the hon. Member would send it on to the police it would be a good thing to do. The trial of Larkin was at the beginning of the present sittings and over a month ago. The law officers were most anxious that everything should be done as regularly as possible. When Larkin was brought on for trial Bamber was not examined against him according to the arrangement made. Those engaged in the case had told him that it would be utterly useless to proceed with the case against Larkin unless Bamber was examined as a witness. That, he thought, would have been unfair, and as the strike was over and the city quiet he thought it was best to let the whole matter drop. There was, he feared, a vindictive spirit in Belfast and a desire to punish Larkin, not because of the assault, but because he was a leader in the strike.

SIR E. CARSON said that as regarded the Ashtown case it was to his mind a scandal that in that House a charge which amounted to one of attempted murder, or inducing people to commit murder, should be made against a man upon the flimsiest evidence and upon the keeping back of evidence put forward by the hon. Member for East Galway. Lord Ashtown had been the subject of obloquy and charges in Ireland during the last six months, which anybody who had followed the discussion must know to be absolutely without foundation. Inquiry had been challenged by no one more prominently than by Lord Ashtown himself. For three months it was insinuated against him, by people who ought to have known a great deal better, that he was the cause of the explosion in which he very nearly lost his own life. It was insinuated over and over again that Lord Ashtown had attempted to blow himself up. He knew the ways of Nationalist Members and their doings in Ireland. This matter was hardly terminated when these charges were made in the House of Commons on the suggestion of the Member for East Galway, that Lord Ashtown was implicated in a second outrage in which he invited people to blow up the church in his own district in order that he might have the gratification of calling it another outrage in Ireland, or in order that these people might be induced to commit crimes so that he could have the pleasure of having them arrested. A more disgraceful and more serious charge it was impossible to imagine. He really thought the Attorney-General might have said something a little stronger than he did in denouncing this system of making false and scandalous charges against people in Ireland simply because they happened to be obnoxious to hon. Members below the gangway. [A NATIONALIST MEMBER: Above the Gangway.] How did the hon. Member for East Galway bring the matter forward? Certain letters were written bearing the postmark of Dublin. Lord Ashtown had informed the police that there was going to be an attempted outrage on that day. It was a terrible coincidence that Lord Ashtown happened to be in Dublin at the date when the letters were posted and that Lord Ashtown should himself inform the police that he had got this information. What the hon. Member apparently knew was that Lord Ashtown himself had received letters in the same hand-writing, and that he had at once taken those letters to the police. [Cries of No."] That matter was fully investigated by the Attorney-General and he took the proper course. This woman was put upon her trial in Dublin and the prosecution appeared to have broken down because the expert evidence as to the handwriting was not entirely satisfactory. There was the whole matter so far as the House knew, and he said again that for an hon. Member of that House to get up and make charges of that kind against Lord Ashtown, who was not there to answer for himself, was a scandal and was an act of cowardice. [Cries of "Order, order."]

*THE CHAIRMAN: That is an un-Parliamentary expression.

SIR E. CARSON: I will withdraw the expression and use "baseness." [Cries of Order.]

*THE CHAIRMAN: That is equally an imputation of bad motive.

SIR E. CARSON said he would of course withdraw, and he would leave it to all hon. Members themselves to place the proper epithet upon conduct so scandalous. He wished to say a few words on the matter out of which the debate had arisen. It seemed to him that the system of yielding in Ireland to the pressure of the mob was becoming rather an expensive matter. The Committee were asked for a sum of £1,500, in addition to £1,000 already voted, for extra fees to the law officers for the prosecutions which they had had to conduct. He might say, in passing, that the only gratification he had was that this money was going to the law officers rather than to any of the other Departments in Ireland. He did not in the least begrudge that the right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues who had had to carry on the work should be properly paid, but during this year of conciliation, as he supposed he must call it, apparently the fees of the right hon. Gentlemen amounted to £2,100, whereas the average for the previous ten years, during the *regime* of the wicked coercionists, it amounted to about £800. From the figures before him it appeared that previous to the coming into office of the present Government the sum of £8,000 was surrendered to the Exchequer out of the sum voted, and that in the year before £6,000 was similarly surrendered. Not only was nothing to be surrendered to the Exchequer this year, but the year of conciliation had eaten up the whole of the sum voted for law prosecutions, and they were faced with this Supplementary Estimate. The truth of the matter was that they had in the present year the maximum of cost and the minimum of result. Whether they had any result at all was a matter of grave doubt. The Attorney-General thought that cattle-driving had been largely put down by abortive prosecutions. Therefore, in future, the law would be administered in this way: juries would be advised not to convict, as it was more successful to acquit than to convict.

MR. CHERRY: I said that bringing the prosecutions and having the facts brought out in public had a certain amount of effect.

SIR E. CARSON did not know anything that could have a worse effect than day after day exhibiting to the public who were inclined to break the law, the absolute paralysis of the law itself. He was sceptical whether the action of the Chief Secretary was stopping cattle-driving. From the newspaper accounts he read he very much doubted it. If it had been stopped, at what cost was it? By the absolute surrender all along the line to the men who had broken the law with impunity. What else could he do? When he announced the other night that his policy was to break up the rich grass lands, he was announcing that surrender to the forces of disorder in Ireland. Everybody must have anticipated what would ensue if the right hon. Gentleman was not prepared to enforce the law and to take care that people should not break the law with impunity. He would like to ask the Chief Secretary what were the means he proposed to take with regard to the holdings of grass lands? Were the tenants to understand that they had better not take them because they would be broken up?

*THE CHAIRMAN: I am sorry to stop the right hon. Gentleman, but he is now getting out of order.

SIR E. CARSON said he only wanted to point out that the paralysis of the law under the right hon. Gentleman had led to an impossible situation in regard to the letting of these lands, and he would not pursue the subject. The Attorney-General had tried to minimise boycotting in Ireland. He himself did not take the same satisfactory view of the report of the inspector from East Galway. The Attorney-General seemed to think it was a very small thing that a man was unable to procure what was necessary for carrying on his business, that he should be unable to secure in his locality what was necessary, that he should not be able to get his horses shod, that he should not be able to get labourers, and that the people in his employment should leave him. To him it seemed a very grave interference with the liberty of any man who honestly wished to carry on his business. When the Attorney-General was minimising these matters, he wondered whether the right hon. Gentleman had ever had a conversation with Mr. Persse, one of the gentlemen whose cattle were driven. He wished everybody there could have heard a lecture which Mr. Persse gave the other day, how in Galway he took a farm from whom nobody had ever been evicted, not grazing land either, how immediately his labourers were ordered to leave at the dictation of the League, how when he cultivated the land each labourer had to have a policeman behind him, and the police had to follow the plough. Mr. Persse stated, with great truth, that he knew when he walked down the street in a free country even with his bodyguard of police, he might be shot at or assaulted, and not a single man would be made amenable to justice under the law as at present administered. It was all very well to try and minimise matters, but these were facts which could not be denied, which could be borne testimony to by many persons. He might well ask: How far had the Government prosecutions been successful; and if they had not been successful, what did the Government propose to do in future to make them successful? The real test was whether they could punish the criminal under the present law. If they could not, then it must be amended or supplemented to make it effective. On another matter he desired to call attention to the extraordinary contention put forward by the Attorney-General in the Judge Bodkin case recently, which seemed to be of far-reaching importance. He would not discuss the merits of the case. He knew Judge Bodkin and was glad to see him appointed. When the Court was asked to grant a writ of *quo warranto* for the purpose of discovering whether Judge Bodkin was rightly appointed, the Attorney-General put forward an extraordinary claim, and it was a claim of such far-reaching consequences that it ought not to be allowed to go without observation. When the Court was asked to grant a writ *quo warranto*, as he understood it, the contention of the Attorney-General was that he had a right to come into the Court and say: "I am superior to the power of this Court: it is my right, as Attorney-General for the King, to stop the proceedings of the Court, even if the Court wish to grant the writ." It was impossible to conceive that the Attorney-General had a right to set the Court at defiance, and such an extraordinary claim ought not to be allowed to pass without observation. They might have the Attorney-General when someone came into the Court and asked for a writ of *habeas corpus* for the purpose of testing the validity of the imprisonment of a man——

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR (Kildare, N.): I rise to a point of order. I desire to know whether the right hon. Gentleman is in order in questioning or bringing up an argument which was confirmed by the whole Court—the three Judges—in their judgment of the case?

*THE CHAIRMAN: I understand that the right hon. Gentleman is referring to the action of the Attorney-General for Ireland in connection with one of these contentious cases in the Estimates. If that is so, I do not think there is any reason to stop him.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR: I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman in attacking the argument is not also attacking the judgment?

*THE CHAIRMAN: So far as I remember, the particular plea of the Attorney-General for Ireland was not adjudicated upon.

SIR E. CARSON said that that was so; it was never adjudicated upon; but even if it had been, he contended he had a perfect right to challenge the action of the Executive in Ireland, because if such a claim was to be allowed to go on and it were said that, if a writ of *quo warranto* was issued or a writ of *habeas corpus*, the Attorney-General, as representative of the King, had a right to stop the action of the Court, away went the whole liberty of the subject. This was a matter of far-reaching consequences, and it seemed strange that the Attorney-General of a Liberal Government should have put forward such a contention. All he could say was that if there was any ground for such a claim on the part of the Attorney-General the sooner there was legislation to put an end to it the better. But so far as he knew any such claim had never been made before on the part of any Executive Officer either in this country or in Ireland.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said that before the right hon. the Chief Secretary spoke he would like for a few moments to call the attention of the Committee to what appeared to him to be an important matter brought before the Committee that evening by his hon. friend the member for East Galway. They on that side of the House had been denounced in very strong terms by the right hon. Member for Dublin University, for making charges against Lord Ashtown. He himself made no charge against Lord Ashtown. All he maintained was that a case had been made out that night deserving of the most careful investigation. It seemed full of suspicion. He thought that if the right hon. Member for Dublin University felt it his duty to indulge in eloquent denunciations of hon. Members from Ireland for making such charges, his language might have been better directed against Lord Ashtown, who had made it his profession and had elicited large sums of money from people in this country and in Ireland, to make charges against the Irish people which were entirely without foundation. Before he explained the nature of their complaint against the administration of criminal law in Ireland in connection with this case, there were two points to which he desired to draw attention. First of all, the main point in the speech of his hon. friend the Member for East Galway, the point which undoubtedly aroused attention of hon. Members, had not been answered either by the Attorney-General or by the Member for Dublin University. That was, "How did Lord Ashtown come to know the hour and place at which the outrage was going to take place?" Letters were written from Dublin to five men in Galway—who had no intention of committing the outrage—inviting them to do so. These letters were criminal letters. They were not acted upon. From what source did Lord Ashtown hear of these letters being written? He could have no other means of knowledge except from the same hand which wrote the letters. That was the really important point, and neither the Attorney-General nor the Member for Dublin University who stood up to champion Lord Ashtown, had dealt with the matter.

SIR E. CARSON: The facts I know were the facts stated by the Attorney-General. What he stated was that Lord Ashtown was informed on the Saturday that the outrage would take place.

MR. DILLON: Whom did Lord Ashtown get the letter from? Was he right in saying that the letter was in the same hand-writing as the letters written to the people of Galway inviting them to commit this outrage?

SIR E. CARSON: I think the Attorney-General stated so.

MR. DILLON: Then these criminal letters were sworn in Court to be in the hand-writing of Minnie Walsh. He did not for one moment say whether she was guilty or not. The man who swore that these letters were in the hand-writing of Minnie Walsh was one of the greatest experts in this country, a man from the Home Office, he believed, and all he maintained was that the hand-writing must have been very like the hand-writing of the other letters. Minnie Walsh was an old retainer of the Ashtown family, a person who had been for years in correspondence with Lord Ashtown and his family, and who at that moment was in correspondence with Lord Ashtown. How was it possible, if Lord Ashtown received a letter of this character in a hand-writing familiar to him, telling him of this outrage, that three days afterwards he gave this same woman £5 to pursue investigations and strive to obtain information he alleged could be obtained? All he maintained was that the case made out by his hon. friend was one clouded with the gravest possible suspicion and one demanding the most searching investigation. That was all the Nationalist Members claimed. They had made no charge. He made no charge, and he did not believe his hon. friend made any charge beyond stating, as they are perfectly entitled to state, that the whole of the circumstances and the facts of the case were surrounded by suspicion. Then the right hon. Member for Dublin University went on to say that Lord Ashtown had had many other letters—some anonymous and some signed by Minnie Walsh, and that he immediately handed them over to the police. He did nothing of the kind. It was perfectly true that he had in his possession many letters from Minnie Walsh, but he did not hand these letters over to the police. He never approached the police until the police approached him.

*Mr. CHERRY: What I said was that he communicated with the Castle authorities. I think it was from the Under-Secretary that I heard at an early stage of the letters of Minnie Walsh.

Mr. DILLON: I was dealing with the statement of the right hon. Member for Dublin University.

Sir E. CARSON: I was merely restating the facts as stated by the Attorney-General. When the Attorney-General quoted the Castle authorities I thought he meant the police.

Mr. DILLON: Am I not right in saying that Lord Ashtown never communicated with the police until my friend the Member for East Galway set the criminal law in motion?

*Mr. CHERRY: I know that at a very early stage he communicated with the Castle authorities; whether with the police or not I am not sure.

Mr. DILLON said that the first suggestion of a prosecution or of bringing the matter to the knowledge of the Government and the public was the action of his hon. friend, and he was informed that after he put the law in motion Mr. Trench, Lord Ashtown's agent, and the gentleman who paid £5 to Minnie Walsh, wrote her that her letters were safely locked up in his safe, and that he would take care that they would never come into the hands of the police. Therefore, he came to the point and said that it was absolutely inaccurate to say, so far as he understood it, that Lord Ashtown immediately handed over these suspicious letters to the police. He believed that these letters would have still been in Mr. Trench's safe and would never have been handed over to the police had it not been for the action of his hon. friend. All he said was that there was very grave cause for suspicion, and that in these matters they were entitled to have suspicion aroused much more easily in Ireland than in England. It was all very fine for hon. Members to attack them for making insinuations, as they were pleased to call them; but in a case of suspicion hon. Members must remember that they lived in a country where the *agent provocateur* was a common instrument to employ, and when Lord Ashtown handed over this woman to justice he knew that Dublin Castle had over and over again initiated prosecutions and obtained convictions by asking people to commit crime. The first fact he wished to bring home to the minds of Members of the House and of the people of this country was that in this case, although there were a large number of suspicious letters, some of them anonymous and some of them signed, all of them in the possession of Lord Ashtown and his agent, they did not communicate them to the Government, or put the law in motion until his hon. friend forced their hands. On the first occasion on which the county inspector visited Lord Ashtown at his residence, the latter did not hand over all these letters; he did not hand them over until the occasion of the trial in Dublin. He thought, also, there was a well-founded complaint as to the method by which the law was put in motion by the prosecutors in Ireland. The Attorney-

General had very properly taken full responsibility for that action. They complained of the proceedings in the police court. In Ireland and even in this country, public attention had been aroused by these proceedings, and when this new case arose, everybody naturally said that this woman should be prosecuted, as the police thought her guilty, in the first instance for an attempt to procure the commission of an abominable crime—and in connection with that let him direct hon. Members' attention to facts showing that there was an abominable conspiracy in this matter. In the columns of London newspapers he had read weeks before of this abominable crime which was going to horrify Ireland. In the *Daily Telegraph* he saw it stated that their correspondent had information of a crime which was to throw all previous crimes into the shade, and that he could point to a certain church where a week hence a bomb was to be exploded in the church, and the whole congregation while worshipping their God were to be hurled into eternity. These things caused in their minds the deepest suspicion as to the ramifications of this whole business. Then came the police court trial. The Attorney-General answering his hon. friend, who said he was not asked to give evidence, replied that his hon. friend had no evidence to give of any value. How did the Crown know that? Because when his hon. friend came to Dublin they never asked him what his evidence was at all, and told him simply and curtly that he was not required. He himself went to Dublin, and when he went down to the court with his hon. friend to hear this interesting case, what was their amazement to see this woman put into the dock and charged in the first instance with obtaining money by false pretences from Lord Ashtown and Mr. Trench, his agent, and the first two witnesses called against her were her employers Lord Ashtown and Mr. Trench, who made no complaint of that sort. The result of these proceedings was to convince public opinion in Ireland and in England that this was a fresh plot against Lord Ashtown, and yet Lord Ashtown and Mr. Trench too, he thought, said that they had no part in making the charge against this woman of obtaining money under false pretences. Where did that charge come from, and who invented it? Had hon. Members ever heard in this country of a woman being charged with obtaining money under false pretences, and then evidence of that nature being given? Lord Ashtown admitted giving her the money and being constantly in correspondence with her, and Mr. Trench admitted that she was frequently in his office, and that on the last occasion that she was there Lord Ashtown came into the room and Mr. Trench discreetly retired and left them together. They had no complaint to make against her of obtaining money under false pretences, and yet that was the main charge brought against her. And when she was summoned by the Crown for these two crimes, the main one being obtaining money by false pretences, where did she go to for protection? She went down straight to Mr. Trench's office, where she brought out the summons and said, "What am I to do now?" And Mr. Trench said, "Go to Mr. Brady the solicitor, and he will take up your case for you," and she actually went and employed a solicitor, acting on the advice of Mr. Trench, from whom the Crown prosecutors said she had obtained money under false pretences. This was not a case to be dismissed by the eloquence of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dublin University. It was a very serious case, and while he made no charge, as he said, the facts were uncontradicted and were full of suspicion and doubt, and when they thought of this, that the whole liberties of the people of their country were aimed at by an abominable conspiracy at the head of which was Lord Ashtown himself, with confederates among the leading English newspapers, they were entitled to appeal to the House of Commons and ask that the fullest possible light should be turned upon these proceedings. It was the duty of the Government to resort to whatever means were at their disposal to examine this thing to the very bottom, and to find out how it came to pass that the proceedings of what it was admitted was a bogus conspiracy to commit outrage, was revealed to Lord Ashtown at the very moment that it was plotted in Dublin, and that this extraordinary and criminal correspondence between him and this unhappy woman was concealed from the knowledge of the Government until it was dragged out of Lord Ashtown.

Mr. BIRRELL said that this was rather an unusual debate, and after what had fallen from the hon. Member who had just sat down he thought they would all agree that this House was not a tribunal well suited to investigate such a matter as that which he had brought before them, and he himself felt that it was perfectly impossible to continue the discussion when they had not the same means of knowledge, and all of them knew little bits of the facts and not the whole case. The Attorney-General—he did not know whether he was wise or not—read the whole thirteen counts—a method rather calculated, he thought, to bring into contempt the noble profession to which they both belonged. But he agreed that those counts were very complete, and that they charged this Mrs. Walsh with every possible offence that could by any ingenuity of a draughtsman be connected with the occurrence in question. Upon that indictment she had stood her trial, and, although it was true she had not been acquitted, the jury had disagreed, and it was for the Attorney-General to consider whether fresh proceedings should be taken. In that state of things he thought it would be very undesirable for them to discuss the matter at all—although, no doubt, it was rather late in the day for him to make that suggestion. But the real difficulty of the case was that it broke down because the jury were not disposed to rest upon the evidence of the expert witness with regard to handwriting, and the whole point was to connect the defendant with these most villainous letters which were so properly brought to the notice of the police by the hon. Member—letters which were enormously long, which were animated by a most malicious and dangerous spirit, and which were certainly well calculated to stir up a feeling of the keenest indignation that such letters should have been written. It was often urged against him that he did not send all sorts of people to prison in Ireland. The difficulty he found was to get evidence against them upon which the Courts would convict; and here the case broke down because of the unsatisfactory nature of the handwriting evidence. The learned counsel brought in the Beck case, and the fact that the expert had given evidence in it, although he did not know that anybody who had anything to do with that case stood condemned for all time. The counsel also occasionally called him Mr. Beck instead of his own name. This was one of the humours of the trial, and in that way the whole case was prejudiced. He did not pretend to have acquainted himself very accurately with the facts of the case, but he read the newspaper report of it, and he did not think anybody could say that it was a gross miscarriage of justice that the jury disagreed. It was not unnatural that hon. Gentlemen below the gangway should feel rather strongly when Lord Ashtown's name was mentioned. Those who did not quite agree with Lord Ashtown would feel that it was a very painful duty—if it was a duty—that he had taken upon himself, of collecting mere newspaper reports—and the Irish papers did give very singular reports—of such things as rowdy meetings of boards of guardians and other boards, putting them together under one band, and circulating them all over Europe as if they represented fairly and honestly the real state of things in Ireland. He did not wonder, therefore, that there was a good deal of feeling. But no accusation whatever was made against Lord Ashtown. ["Oh, oh!"] Well, everybody who had spoken had disclaimed making any accusation against him, and he entirely associated himself with what fell from the Attorney-General, that all who had an opportunity of investigating this case felt perfectly satisfied that he had no concern in it. Upon other matters really everything that had been said to-day upon the general case against him was said with great ability by Opposition speakers in the debate on the Address. There was one thing, however, that he would refer to. It had been supposed that if only they had prosecuted the hon. Member for Westmeath they would have obtained convictions in the cases in which the law officers prosecuted with so much vigour in Dublin and elsewhere against cattle-driving. That was, of course, an easy thing to say. He did not complain of the hon. Member for Westmeath on a former occasion, because he confessed he had a great dislike to seem even to sneer at a man behind his back. It was a matter of regret to him that he was not in his place, and he certainly had nothing whatever to do with his not being in his place. And if he had been in his place, he would have felt at greater liberty to give him the reasons which animated him in leaving him alone. He had the advantage of being acquainted with the character of the public speeches of that hon. Member. He dared say he might have underrated the power of his eloquence and his great personality. He knew the hon. Member had been described as another Daniel O'Connell, that it had been said that he had been received with great enthusiasm by crowds who had been depicted in the newspapers as hanging upon his words as they dropped from his lips. But really he did not take that view of the eloquence of the hon. Member or the importance of his subject. The hon. Member went about different parts of the country, and when he met people coming out of chapel he addressed the portions of the congregations that cared to listen to him; and if he had been reported *verbatim*, if the manuscript of his speeches had been handed to the reporter, he could not help thinking the speeches would have fallen as flat upon the mind of the reader as he had reason to believe they often did on the particular spot where the words were emitted. He took, therefore, the view that it would be an exceedingly undesirable thing to give the hon. Member what he called a State trial, a prosecution for using language inciting to an illegal offence, before a jury, of course, in which his own defence was to occupy three days—this punishment he did not desire to inflict even on the Lord Chief Justice of Ireland. He did not take that step, and he was still satisfied that he was right. But one thing he had overlooked which he ought not to have overlooked, having practised law himself. He did not consider so carefully as he ought to have done perhaps that when his right hon. and learned friend did direct prosecution of those who were actually engaged in the illegal offence, the use the ingenious counsel engaged for the defence would undoubtedly make of this. Counsel was, of course, bound according to traditions of the profession to make use of every possible argument for his client, and he undoubtedly did use a powerful argument to the jury when he said that the Government left alone this great orator, this peripatetic philosopher who went about delivering these speeches; and then portions of the reports in the *Irish Times* would be read, and sympathy would be excited for cattle-driving. He was by no means certain—in fact he thought indeed that the effect would have been the other way—that, had the hon. Member been found guilty in a State prosecution—and it was quite possible he would not have been—and sentenced to a period of imprisonment, the fact would in any way have affected the minds of juries when they came to hear cases against cattle-drivers. The offenders had been described as lads, boys, dupes, and poor farmers. Some of them were sixty years of age, many forty years old, and very few under twenty-five; they certainly were not boys, when the term was used in a common colloquial sense, they certainly were not boys, and he did not think it was right to call them dupes. They had mistaken notions of their own interest, and had formed an entirely wrong conception of the effect that might accrue to themselves personally and their hopes of getting land, but he was afraid it was giving them a far too favourable view to say they are dupes, and certainly they were not dupes of the hon. Member for Westmeath. All this is supplementary to what he said the other day as his reason for leaving the hon. Member alone. He deliberately came to the conclusion that a prosecution, so far from tending to put down cattle-driving, and the evils that gave rise to cattle-driving, would increase the practice. Though language was used day after day towards him personally to induce him to do what he did not want to do and give the hon. Member a State trial, he abstained from doing so believing that it would increase lawlessness, and in no sense would it have punished anybody in Ireland for lawlessness. An hon. Member who had spoken, as he always spoke, very well—and he did not know why the hon. Member suggested that he did not treat him with courtesy; he always listened to the hon. Member with attention and found considerable force in what he said—that hon. Member had complained that he (Mr. Birrell) had said the offence of cattle-driving was intimidatory and not predatory, and the leader of the Opposition had complained of a distinction he had drawn at an earlier stage between cattle-driving and cattle-lifting; the right hon. Gentleman thought this was an undesirable thing to do because it seemed to minimise the nature of the offence. But what was an unfortunate Chief Secretary to do when he had to make an explanation to the House anxious to know the facts? The very essence of the criminal law was clear definition of the offence, and he said the offence is not predatory; the object was not to steal the cattle, as many people thought it was, and he was not sure that there were not educated people even now who thought that cattle-driving was cattle-stealing,. Because he felt in honour bound to make it perfectly plain, and because in making it plain he minimised the offence, it was unfair to assume that in his heart he sympathised with the offence. In the same way he might say the object was intimidatory, not predatory. He had said so, and it was so. It was an unlawful reprehensible form of intimidation, but if he was not allowed to say what is was and the occasion of it, that was to impose upon him an amount of silence which was unreasonable. From cattle-driving speakers passed to boycotting. For the offence of cattle-driving he admitted that the Government had failed, lamentably failed, in the great majority of instances to obtain verdicts. Then they dragged in boycotting with all its horrors, and here again the Chief Secretary was put into a rather awkward position. A particular case was brought up, facts were known to him, and a good many things were said on both sides that ought to be gone into; but so much did he desire to see the detestable practice put down that he was slow to go into the actual facts of a case lest he might expose himself, as he had in relation to cattle-driving, to the imputation of seeming to minimise the effect of the practice. Therefore, he was not going to say a word about its being serious or less serious. He wished to God it would cease; it pointed to a state of feeling which he was sure every body deplored. It was resorted to as an act of war; the only way in which anybody had been able to say a word of excuse for it was in the same way as they excused the horrors of war—things they could not contemplate in cold blood. Those days he thought were gone by, but he admitted there were far too many cases of boycotting. Hon. Members would say, why not put it down? and there the Government joined issue. They never would be successful in putting down boycotting by criminal prosecutions. The only successful method of putting down boycotting was by civil procedure. In a civil proceeding when they could show a case of genuine conspiracy to deprive a man of the means of livelihood or to prevent him from making profit from his produce and obtain damages, they did more to deal a blow at boycotting than by putting persons in the dock and prosecuting them under the very dangerous and questionable law of conspiracy. He agreed that if they had chosen to put into force the clauses of the Crimes Act, which would have enabled them to put the crime of cattle-driving before two resident magistrates, they could have filled the gaols of Roscommon and Galway with prisoners. But when they jumped off that into boycotting and spoke as if he could by the exercise of legal process secure convictions in many—too many—cases of boycotting that existed all over Ireland, he said at once he could not do it, and he did not think anybody could do it, and it was not by these commercial proceedings that they could put down these offences. He, therefore, could only say that although he regretted as much as anybody this Supplementary Estimate, he did not agree with the right hon. and learned Gentleman that these law costs were matters of congratulation. He thought it was most melancholy that the Police Estimates should be over a million of money, and that he should be there asking for a Supplementary Estimate, but he did not suppose Gentlemen opposite seriously complained because they had employed the law officers to make these prosecutions. In fact they were asked to do so by one Gentleman opposite in order to show that the Government was in earnest. They took that expensive form of showing that the Government was in earnest. All he could say was that he deeply regretted it, and he hoped the day might come when, not only no Supplementary Estimate of this kind would ever be asked for, but that much of the vast sum now required to keep Ireland in order might be set free for other purposes greatly needed.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said that the right hon. Gentleman seemed to think he was going to take advantage of the opportunity given by this Supplementary Estimate to make a speech which would be more fitting and proper to the debate which had taken place last week. The Committee, however, need not be under any such alarm. The few observations he had to make would be strictly relevant to what had passed in that debate. The first observation related to the case of Lord Ashtown. Of that case he knew nothing except what he had heard in the course of the discussion, which nobody could hear without feeling that the House was really being used for the purpose of making the very gravest charges against an individual who, from the nature of the case, could not be there to defend himself; who had courted inquiry into this matter consistently from the very beginning; and whom the Government were bound to defend if they had the means of defence at their disposal. He thought they ought in any case to shelter him when he was made the subject of an attack such as that to which they had listened from the hon. Member for East Mayo who, although he told them in his speech that he intended to bring no charge, spent twenty minutes in enforcing upon the attention of the House, with his accustomed eloquence, the most serious charge which he thought could be brought against any human being—a charge, namely, that Lord Ashtown was guilty, not of committing crime himself, which was bad enough in all conscience, but had in it the element of personal courage, but of the far more infamous crime of urging other people to commit a crime in order that they might be found guilty, and that through them a blow might be struck at the Party from whom he differed, or at an agitation of which he disapproved. For his part, he did not gather that any evidence had been brought forward in that debate, or in that House or out of it, in favour of that abominable charge. He did not think it ought to be made unless there was evidence; and when he remembered that Lord Ashtown himself had done all in his power to court inquiry into the matter he thought it ill became the hon. Gentleman to use his great ability for making such an accusation against Lord Ashtown; and he was sorry it was not in the power of the Government to make a more effective defence of the man whom he was convinced they did not believe to be guilty of the crime with which he had been charged. He hoped at any rate the Attorney-General for Ireland would remember, in dealing with any future developments of this case, if future developments there were to be, that, as he thought, he was bound to consider whether the machinery of the law he had at his disposal could not be used to elucidate the whole of this matter—to get to the very bottom of the affair. If he used all the machinery at his disposal he would rejoice whatever the result might be.

*MR. CHERRY: Can the right hon. Gentleman suggest anything that I could do and have not done to get to the bottom of it?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said he did not suggest that, because he had not the means at his disposal. He had not the adequate knowledge; and if the right hon. Gentleman told him that he had used, and desired to use, every machinery at his disposal to get at the truth, he accepted his statement.

*MR. CHERRY: I certainly do.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said the right hon. Gentleman was qualified to give that assurance, and he accepted his statement. Then, if all the machinery at his disposal had been used to get to the bottom of the case, and nothing had been shown that threw the smallest suspicion on Lord Ashtown, it was most unfortunate that the House should be used as a theatre in which and from which accusations could be levelled against a man whom he firmly believed to be innocent and whom the Government believed to be innocent. Leaving that subject, he came to the broader aspects of the question with which the right hon. Gentleman had been dealing. He had been charged of course —he himself had been one of those who had charged him—with not having dealt with the development of crime in Ireland at a sufficiently early stage and with not dealing with it when he did take it in hand with sufficient rigour. There was now another theory to account for the failure of the machinery of law in Ireland, a theory which he had heard for the first time that evening, and which was developed by the learned Gentleman the Attorney-General for Ireland. He described colloquies he had had with his colleague in Dublin in which these two gentlemen, contemplating the painful state of crime in Ireland, came to the conclusion that it was mainly due to Unionist speeches. In the view of these two learned gentlemen, Unionist orators, when they charged the Government with dealing too lightly with the crime of cattle-driving, were really spreading effectively abroad amongst the people the doctrine that the Government were indifferent to the crime which they were really doing their best to put down. Let them contrast that theory of the influence of English Unionist oratory in this country with the Chief Secretary's view of the impotence of Irish oratory in Ireland itself. His friends behind him and he himself in the course of their speeches in the country did say and thought that earlier utterances of the Government with respect to cattle-driving in Ireland spread abroad the view that they regarded it lightly. The right hon. Gentleman had sincerely done his best to mitigate that not unnatural error of the public mind in Ireland—the effect of those earlier utterances. But because they, the critics of the Government, said so, the whole Irish population in these disaffected districts had become poisoned by this view. The infection had spread, and they were the authors of the Irish view that the Government treated this matter lightly. When an Irish representative—the chosen spokesman in that House of Irish opinion, the valued colleague of the representatives of a large part of Ireland sitting below the gangway—when he went about Sunday after Sunday in the very districts themselves propagating this view, the right hon. Gentleman had nothing to say for him except that his speeches, as far as he could learn, fell very flat whenever and wherever they were uttered, and that if they had not got an unfortunate and temporary notoriety through the enterprise of some journalistic pen in Ireland, they would not have been noticed. That might be the relative weight of importance attached by the Government to Unionist speech on the one hand and Nationalist speech on the other. He confessed he rated the authority and power of hon. Gentlemen below the gangway over the minds, opinions, and actions of their fellow-countrymen far higher than the right hon. Gentleman did; and he did not think that an Irish Member of Parliament could go about the country preaching to willing ears a particular policy, recommending it not merely to the general, but to the personal and immediate interests of these people, and be the impotent, the dull, the neglected, and the negligible quantity which the right hon. Gentleman supposed he was. Even if the hon. Member had been as negligible a quantity as the right hon. Gentleman supposed, he did not think there was a worse moral to be preached in any part of the world that the leaders were to be allowed to escape because they were Members of Parliament, but the followers, dupes or not, were to be prosecuted. That mentally suggested that the Government did not treat the matter very seriously. The right hon. Gentleman's own natural style of oratory did not always suggest that he took a very serious view of his subject, although he personally—let him hasten to add—thought that the veneer of jocularity which occasionally glittered over the solid basis of argument he inclined to use was so natural to his style that he believed, however deeply he felt on a subject, he could not refrain from entertaining them in all his speeches.

MR. BIRRELL: I will do my best.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said the right hon. Gentleman could not help adorning his speech by these playful sallies which nobody enjoyed more than he did. At all events, he thought it would be admitted that, when his object was to persuade the population of these districts that the Government took the very gravest view of the situation, his method of indoctrinating them with that view was not always, perhaps, the most felicitous that could be chosen. But, after all, the argument most relevant to the Supplementary Estimate was the argument based on financial considerations. Had the additional money which they were asked to vote been really used effectively for carrying out law and order in Ireland? By the admission of the Government themselves, the spending of this money, however it might have fructified the legal profession in Ireland, had done absolutely nothing to put down lawlessness. The Chief Secretary said recently that in his view one of the great objects of jury trials was to enable the Government of the day to come into touch with the public opinion of the districts where the jury trials took place. He did not deny that in the case of duelling, which the right hon. Gentleman quoted, the discrepancy between the legal sentence that might be inflicted and the public view taken of the crime as shown by the action of the juries had some effect on our jurisprudence. But what had that to do with the present case? In this case, as the Government admitted, a very grave offence had been committed. Was it not a scandalous state of things that they should be spending thousands of pounds, not in vindicating the law, but in showing that the law was useless?—not in protecting unoffending and harmless citizens, but in showing that they could not protect them? There had been an expensive legal movement in which the Attorney-General for Ireland had borne a leading part, but it was purely a parade. Not a single shot had been fired, not in anger at all events, and certainly not a shot had gone home, for no one had been brought down. It has been a pure sham from beginning to end; and the Government must have known all along it was going to be a sham from beginning to end. Was it not an expensive way of coming into touch with public opinion to spend these thousands of pounds on abortive jury trials? The Government knew very well before these trials began what the opinion of certain classes in Ireland was in regard to these offences. What, then, was the use of these abortive jury trials? They did not convict the offenders. They did not give the Government any information which they had not already possessed as to the state of public opinion. The Attorney-General for Ireland, with an optimistic spirit which did him credit, declared that while the jury trials were abortive in the sense that no guilty person was brought to justice, they had done good by spreading abroad sound views in regard to the enormity of the crime of cattle-driving.

*MR. CHERRY: The right hon. Gentleman forgets that in the first case the jury convicted.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That was an excellent reason for trying a second case, and the Government did try it and failed. I do not know how many cases the Government tried and failed, but there was a large number. Indeed, no one has been louder in proclaiming the lamentable failures than the Chief Secretary with his usual candour. What, then, is the use of talking about one success out of so many failures? And what was the source of those failures? Were they owing to the speeches for the prosecution? I am sure they were able speeches. But does the Attorney-General really think that while his addresses failed to convince the juries to whom they were addressed, they had great influence outside the Court in carrying a more wholesome spirit to the criminal districts?

MR. BIRRELL: The juries disagreed very often.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I gather from that interruption that the Chief Secretary thinks I am unduly harping on the want of success of the Attorney-General; and that there would have been acquittals in all cases had not the Attorney-General by his addresses prevented that scandal from polluting the course of justice in Ireland. Well, I give the Attorney-General the benefit of the doubt. But the real question for the House is this—if we have to vote this enormous amount for legal charges in Ireland, ought we not to see that something happens in consequence of it—that justice is done and the law is vindicated? Are the Government doing all they can in that direction? They are not. They know perfectly well that they have at their disposal laws which would enable them to deal with a situation which they admit is deplorable. They do not take the view of the Leader of the Irish Party that Ireland is a crimeless country. On the contrary, they admit to the full the indictment which has been brought against certain portions of Ireland by this side of the House.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: I never said that Ireland is crimeless. That would be absurd. I said there was less crime in proportion to population than in England.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): Not in cattle-driving.

Mr. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): Yes, and in cattle-maiming.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said the hon. Member for Waterford would have the House believe that all these charges of agrarian outrages in Ireland were the result of a criminal conspiracy of English newspapers and Unionist politicians. But that was not the view of the Government. The Government admitted that there were parts of Ireland where the rights of peaceable citizens were not preserved by the laws under which those peaceable citizens lived. Were they going to tolerate that state of things? To use the old phrase, "Force is no remedy" was futile. Force was a remedy; and it was the only remedy against all kinds of crime.

Mr. J. MACVEAGH: You tried it.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said that if he had his way he would certainly try the machinery which the law provided to see that the law was obeyed. He could not understand anyone denying in cold blood that perfectly sound maxim, which ought to control the policy of the Government and influence the views and votes of all Members of this House. The Chief Secretary frankly admitted that the only laws he chose to put in force were inefficacious for the purpose for which alone laws were intended. The responsibility of refusing to use the machinery which the law provided for seeing that the subjects of His Majesty were allowed to exercise the rights which the citizens of every free country were permitted to exercise rested heavily on the Government, and he thought when they looked back in calmer moments of reflection, they would admit that it shed little lustre or glory upon an administration which, at all events, was powerful enough, if for nothing else, to carry out the fundamental duties that rested upon all Governments.

Mr. POWER (Waterford, E.) said that the discussion had in the main been devoted to the Lord Ashtown incident, and he wished to say a word or two in regard to that question. He had always been one of those who thought that absentee landlordism had contributed very much to the bringing about of the unfortunate condition of Ireland, but having regard to the position of Lord Ashtown and the way in which he occupied his time he was inclined to wish that he was an absentee landlord. Lord Ashtown and certain other persons in Ireland seemed to spend their time in endeavouring to blacken the character of the country. In the publication "Grievances from Ireland," edited by Lord Ashdown and circulated broadcast throughout England, he selected a few isolated cases, and said that the country was to be judged by those cases. What would be said of Irishmen if, founding their judgment on the scenes which could be witnessed in the streets of London and other cities every day, they were to say that there was no domestic purity in England. It was equally unreasonable to say that the selected cases which were published were typical of life in Ireland. He had from the first regarded the Glenaheiry case as a very suspicious one, but after the revelations which had been made that night, he thought it was more suspicious now than it ever was. The people whom he represented had found fault with the Attorney-General for not having a proper investigation in this case, for, after all, the inquiry which took place could not be regarded as having been complete. He and his friends were anxious that the case should be probed to the bottom. Anyone who looked at the matter with an unbiassed mind would come to the conclusion that the case was full of suspicion and that it should be investigated in the most thorough and searching way. In view of the opinion expressed by the English official who was sent over to Ireland to inquire, it was only right that there should be the fullest possible inquiry, and on behalf of the people who had to pay for the so-called outrage he asked that such an inquiry should take place.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.) said the Committee must feel that it implied a want of respect on the part of the Government towards the Leader of the Opposition that no reply had been given to the very powerful speech of the right hon. Gentleman. He desired to refer to the very feeble answer given by the Attorney-General to the hon. Member for North Belfast in regard to the case of Mr. Larkin. The Attorney-General spoke of the trouble in Belfast as if it were an ordinary labour trouble. He seemed to endorse the remark of the hon. Member for Stoke that the men and their leaders on the whole behaved fairly well. That was a view, at all events, which would be endorsed by no one who knew the facts. It was not a purely labour trouble. It was a Nationalist conspiracy organised and inspired by party and religious hatred of the worst kind. The case presented by the hon. Member for North Belfast had not been answered by the Attorney General. What were the facts? Being afraid that a jury cognisant of the facts in Belfast would convict Mr. Larkin, the Attorney-General and the Chief Secretary determined to remove the accused for trial to Dublin where he would be tried before a more sympathetic jury. The Attorney-General and the Chief Secretary desired that Larkin should be acquitted of the crime with which he was charged. [AN HON. MEMBER: What happened?] The jury disagreed. The disagreement of the jury and an acquittal were equally satisfactory to the Chief Secretary and the Attorney-General, because in either event the result was that a criminal was allowed to go free, When an application was made for a new trial it was refused. The Chief Secretary denied that there was any crime. Why did the Government institute a trial at all if they were not convinced that there was a *prima facie* case?

MR. CHERRY said the motion that Larkin's trial should take place in Dublin was made in Belfast, and he assented to it.

MR. T. L. CORBETT said that no doubt by assenting to the motion the Attorney-General achieved the result he desired, namely, the sending of the man to a more sympathetic place to be tried. In the case of Lord Ashtown the hon. Member for Stoke spoke in terms which, he thought, he would regret on consideration. He admitted with creditable candour that he knew nothing about the case.

MR. J. WARD: Only what I heard here.

MR. T. L. CORBETT said that what the hon. Member had heard from hon. Members on the Nationalist benches would not largely enlighten his mind. The Judge who tried the case did know something about it, and some importance must be attached to what he said. The hon. Member for Stoke would not dare to repeat outside the House the insinuations he had made against Lord Ashtown. There had been a significant silence maintained by the Nationalist Members in this debate. There was a certain grim humour about these Supplementary Estimates for law charges and criminal prosecutions. What he and his friends complained of was that the law was not enforced in Ireland, and that prosecutions proved, as a matter of fact, to be absolutely futile. The answer to the charges which had been brought against the Government, made by the Chief Secretary for Ireland, no doubt with great eloquence, physical energy, and thumping of the box, was after all unsatisfactory. If nothing was to be done why should they pass Estimates for prosecutions for maintaining the so-called law in Ireland; and why should these Estimates be so very much higher than in the days when the law was carried out with efficiency and effect? There were 532 prosecutions for agrarian outrages during the past year. [HON. MEMBERS on the NATIONALIST Benches: Your figures are wrong.]

MR. T. L. CORBETT: The figures are not wrong at all.

MR. HAYDEN: The figures you quote refer to the number of persons and not to the number of prosecutions.

MR. T. L. CORBETT said he accepted the correction, the slip being due to the interruptions from below the gangway, largely encouraged by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Waterford. [Cries of "Divide."] Not until he had replied to these interruptions.

*THE CHAIRMAN: Will the hon. Gentleman kindly address me?

MR T. L. CORBETT: I will continue to address you if you prevent hon. Members below the gangway from continually interrupting me.

*THE CHAIRMAN: I asked the hon. Member to address me, and he makes a reply which is not particularly civil.

MR. T. L. CORBETT said that no one had more respect for the Chairman than he had, and if he had infringed order in any way, he humbly apologised. What he wanted to say was that 532 persons had been prosecuted by the Government, and only eight had been convicted. In addition to the agrarian crimes which had been prosecuted by the Government with *prima facie* evidence before them, cases of outrage upon outrage had been brought before the House by hon. Gentlemen sitting on the Opposition Benches, and the invariable answer of the Chief Secretary was the formula to which they were now becoming accustomed, but with which they were not satisfied, that "the fact was entirely as stated, but that there had been no arrests." Inquiries had lately been made by hon. Members below the gangway in regard to crime in English counties and constituencies, but he noticed that a Question to the Home Secretary about the crime in an English constituency by the hon. Member for Newry had somehow mysteriously been dropped.

MR. MOONEY (Newry) said that if the hon. Gentleman was anxious to know the reason, it was because the Home Secretary had stated that the statistics to be published in a day or two would show the amount of crime there.

MR. T. L. CORBETT said he did not quite follow the interruption. His contention was that there were many cases in Ireland where the crime had been clearly proved, but no conviction had followed.

Question put.

The Committee divided: Ayes, 207; Noes, 75. (Division List No. 7.)

AYES.

Agnew, George William
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Armstrong, W. C. Heaton
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Beauchamp, E.
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, Sir J. Williams (Dev'np'rt
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S. Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W.
Boulton, A. C. F.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Brodie, H. C.
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Brunner, Rt Hn Sir J. T. (Cheshire
Bryce, J. Annan
Burns, Rt. Hn. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Channing, Sir Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Clark, George Smith (Belfast, N
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras, W
Corbett, C. H. (Sussex, E. Gr'st'd
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)

Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cox, Harold
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Crombie, John William
Cross, Alexander
Crossley, William J.
Davies, M. Vaughan- (Cardigan
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dickinson, W.H. (St. Pancras, N.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Duckworth, James
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Sir Francis (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Essex, R. W.
Esslemont, George Birnie
Evans, Samuel T.
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Goddard, Sir Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Gulland, John W.
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hedges, A. Paaget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Col. Sir Ivor (Mon., S.)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lambert, George
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lockwood, Rt. Hn. Lt.-Col. A. R.
Lough, Thomas
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald, J.M. (Falkirk B'ghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
M'Callum, John M.
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Crae, George
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mallet, Charles E
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston
Marnham, F. J.
Massie, J.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morrell, Philip
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Partington, Oswald
Pearce, Robert (Staffs, Leek)
Pearson, W.H.M. (Suffolk, Eye)
Perks, Robert William
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Pollard, Dr.
Priestley, W.E.B. (Bradford, E.)
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Atherstan
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'th
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robisnon, S.
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rowlands, J.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Scott, A.H. (Ashton under Lyne)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Simon, John Allsebrook
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Soares, Ernest J.
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Albert (Staffs, N.W.)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Sutherland, J. E.
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.
Thompson, J. W. H. (Somerset, E
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walters, John Tudor
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent
Waring, Walter
Wason, Rt. Hn. E. (Clackmann'n
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, Henry A.
White, Sir George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whiteley, John Henry (Halifax
Wiles, Thomas
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, Hon. G. G. (Hull, W.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES,—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Barnes, G. N.
Boland, John
Bowerman, C. W.
Burke, E. Haviland-
Carlile, E. Hildred
Clynes, J. R.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cullinan, J.
Curran, Peter Francis
Delany, William
Dillon, John
Duffy, William J.
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Fell, Arthur
Ffrench, Peter
Flynn, James Christopher
Gill, A. H.
Glover, Thomas
Gretton, John
Guinness, Walter Edward
Gwynn, Stephen Lucius
Halpin, J.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazleton, Richard
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Hodge, John
Hogan, Michael
Hudson, Walter
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kilbride, Denis
Lardner, James Carrige Rushe
Law, Hugh A. (Donegal, W.)
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W.
Meagher, Michael
Mooney, J. J.

Murphy, John (Kerry, East)
Nolan, Joseph
O'Brien, Kendal (TipperaryMid
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Phillips, John (Longford, S.)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mp'n
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smyth, Thomas F. (Leitrim, S.
Snowden, P.
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Walsh, Stephen
Walton, Joseph
Wardle, George J.
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES.—Mr. Patrick O'Brien and Captain Donelan.

Resolution to be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £5,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending 31st March, 1908, for the Expenses of the Royal Irish Constabulary."

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) suggested that the Government should postpone this Vote, in view of the fact that they had only a quarter of an hour to discuss it, and it would take some little time as they desired to raise serious points upon it which they could not do in that limited period. It would be more convenient that it should go over, as otherwise, his hon. friend who was going to initiate the discussion, would take up a quarter of an hour, and then have to repeat himself on another occasion.

MR. BIRRELL said the Government were prepared to take the next Vote.

*THE CHAIRMAN: Does the right hon. Gentleman wish to withdraw the Vote?

MR. BIRRELL: Yes; and proceed with the next.

Leave to withdraw the Vote being refused.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG moved to report progress on the ground taken by the hon. Member behind him, that the time at their disposal was not adequate for the discussion of the Vote. They, in that part of the House, also had a number of very grave points which they wished to raise.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again"—(*Mr. Charles Craig.*)—put, and agreed to.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow; Committee also report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

SUPPLY [10TH FEBRUARY].

Resolutions reported.

ARMY (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATE, 1907–8.

1. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £100, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1908, for additional Expenditure in respect of the following Army services, viz.:—

Vote 5. Volunteer Corps, Pay, Allowances, etc.—

	£
E (*a*) Grants for the Extinction of Debts - - -	350,000
E (*b*) Expenses of County Associations - - -	8,000
	358,000
Less Surpluses on other Votes	357,900
	100"

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1907–8.

CLASS II.

2. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £100,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1908, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, and

of Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, including certain Grants in Aid."

3. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £20, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1908, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Mint, including the Expenses of Coinage."

CLASS III.

4. "That a sum, not exceeding £1,870, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1908, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of Public Trustee."

CLASS V.

5. "That a sum, not exceeding £327, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1908, for making good the Net Loss on Transactions connected with the raising of Money for the various Treasury Chests Abroad in the year 1906-7."

First Resolution read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley) said he wished to ask for a assurance from the right hon. Gentleman on two or three points in his speech the day before, which he reserved for future consideration. He could not expect a precise reply, but in view of the fact that in five or six weeks time the new Territorial Army would come into existence, it was desirable that the right hon. Gentleman should at the earliest possible moment explain to the House what the decision of the Government was. The night before the right hon. Gentleman on three or four occasions stated that the Government's mind was not made up on certain very important aspects of the question, but it was difficult to reconcile that statement with the facts of the case, after a perusal of instructions which had already been issued to the County Associations. His right hon. friend the Member for Derbyshire had given a specific example of what was going on throughout the country. The County Association of Derbyshire would be responsible for 3,000 or 4,000 men, but was limited for the expenses of its secretariat to £184 per annum. The secretary of that County Association would have a very onerous duty placed upon his shoulders. The district was a large and scattered one, many parishes were very inaccessible, and the secretariat must involve the employment of some clerk or shorthand writer to carry out the Departmental work. The right hon. Gentleman and the War Office Committee had, however, directed from the War Office that this inadequate sum only should be allowed for this work. It was ridiculous for the War Office to expect that the associations could get good men to serve as secretaries unless they paid a decent salary. What was happening now? There were County Associations in England which had already received the names of possible candidates for the secretarial position. He knew one particular county where a large number of retired officers applied for the post. The County Association reduced the number to six, and of these six gentlemen, no less than five declined to undertake the charge for which they originally applied when they discovered that the salary was of so insignificant a character. He might take another example, that of Lancashire, with which he was connected. Lancashire was too large to be managed by one association, and was accordingly divided into Western and Eastern Associtions. The Western Association, which had its headquarters at Liverpool, was informed that all they could be allowed for the office was the sum of £50.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE. Haddington): You are quite mistaken.

LORD BALCARRES said that although the right hon. Gentleman said he was quite mistaken, the County Association understood that it was the direction of the War Office that not more than £50 should be annually spent for office accommodation.

MR. HALDANE: On what grounds do they understand it?

LORD BALCARRES replied that it was on grounds similar to that which made the County Association of Derbyshire understand that they were limited to £184 for their secretariat. If there was any doubt about the matter, surely it was imperative in the interests of this model army that the right hon. Gentleman should set at rest the doubts which had been caused by the vagueness and indecision of the War Office. That was the difficulty, and it was no use saying that those doubts had arisen through misapprehension, and so on. It was for the right hon. Gentleman and his Army Committee to remove those doubts, by giving precise and specific information. The absence of such information, he considered, was one of the things which was militating enormously against the County Associations. The doubt and the hesitation which existed in people's minds were to be found in the minds of the recruits—the potential or actual members of the Territorial Force—because they did not know what the conditions were under which they were going to be. As he had said, they were within four or five weeks of the actual inception of this great scheme, and yet these doubts existed. The right hon. Gentleman had obligingly undertaken to issue new regulations in pamphlet form in order that it might be made clear what was the actual responsibility which would rest upon these new associations and upon the men in them, and no doubt such information was needed. This particular Vote for £8,000 no doubt only represented a very small fraction of what would be required, but he wished the Government could see its way to expedite the really important information which was needed. In regard to the financial question as to whether the money might not have been better devoted to the extinction of National Debt he would not enter into it, as the Conservative Party were financial heretics, and did not lay claim to the financial purity of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite. Therefore, it was for the latter to criticise the action of the Government; but there was a matter which was infinitely more important—a hundredfold more important—than that, and it was that the Government should make up its mind as to the policy it was going to adopt about these finances. The right hon. Gentleman said that latitude was going to be allowed, but he rather doubted whether it was necessary to allow latitude in the particular case. It was not fair to a County Association, that of Derbyshire for instance, to say: "We will recommend a sum of £180 odd yearly, for your secretary, and then if you like to save money upon other items of your £1,800 you can add that to it." That had been done in one or two cases already, and secretaries had been appointed on the terms of the payment of nominal sums and the County Associations were going to save on all their other administrative Votes; they had told their secretary so, and at the end of the financial year they were going to pay to him as much money as they found remaining to their credit. That was not in his opinion right.

And, it being a quarter past Eight of the Clock, Further Proceeding was postponed without Question put, pursuant to Standing Order No. 4.

RAILWAYS (NATIONALISATION).

*MR. G. A. HARDY (Suffolk, Stowmarket) in moving—"That, in view of the widespread complaints on the part of traders, agriculturists, and the general public with regard to the railway charges and facilities, and particularly with regard to preferential treatment of foreign goods, the time has come to consider how far these evils could be remedied by State purchase of the railways, as foreshadowed by the Railway Regulation Act of 1844,"—said that in bringing this subject before the House, he was fully conscious of the many difficulties and objections which surrounded it. But Socialism was not one. For the Conservative Government in 1844 passed an Act by which the State ownership of railways was settled in principle. Compulsory acquisition was definitely provided for at the discretion of Parliament within twenty-one years from that date. This principle had been steadily kept in view in all the new Railway Acts since that period. The question of railway purchase was not a Party one. It was now advocated by our chambers of commerce, our chambers of agriculture, Members of the House of Lords and Members of the Conservative Party as well as by an immense mass of public opinion. A great impetus had been given to the movement by the remarkable progress abroad. Great Britain was now the only country in Europe except Spain and Portugal which did not control or partly control their railways. France, Germany, Austria, Belgium, Italy, Holland, Russia, Scandinavia and Balkan States owned or partly controlled their lines. In India we possessed our own State railways, perhaps the largest in the world, 32,000 made or making, and 482,000 officials. Those railways not only developed the country and strategetically helped the military, but paid a steady profit for the Empire. Not only did the Continental countries control their railways, but Japan had taken all its railways over. Argentine, Mexico, and even Siam were also acquiring or owned their railways. If they looked at the self-governing Colonies, every one of them except, perhaps, Canada owned their railways. So that, practically, only in England, United States, Spain, Portugal and Turkey private ownership had full sway. Ever since the great powers were granted to the railway companies by the Acts of 1844 and prior Acts there had been a continual struggle and conflict with the traders and the agriculturists against the hardships and burdens the companies had inflicted upon them. Parliament had again and again by Resolutions appointed Select Committees to inquire into the question, and to protect the traders and public, but their grievances still continued, and many had, in despair of obtaining redress, thrown up their hands and said they could not fight the railways longer and had accepted the burden with all its hampering restrictions. He believed he was right in saying that the President of the Board of Trade had received more deputations from aggrieved and suffering agriculturists and traders on this subject than on any other. What were these grievances? Mr. Balfour Browne, whose expert knowledge none could dispute, said—

> "I am not exaggerating when I say that the agricultural question which has been attempted to be met very ineffectually by a palliative Agricultural Rates Bill, is nothing else but a question of railway rates."

They had heard many speeches about protecting the worker, the farmer, and the manufacturer from foreign competition, but here at our doors, in our country, there was a preference given to the foreigner which terribly handicapped our farmers and traders, by the railway companies, who in their search after dividends retarded the development of our commerce. They found meat and dairy produce, fruit and vegetables from Denmark and France, and manufactured goods from Germany and Belgium, conveyed to English markets at a cost in carriage of ½, and not infrequently ⅓ of what the English manufacturers were charged. Rates and fares were generally much dearer in Great Britain than on the State-owned railways on the Continent. The average amount received per ton of goods per 100 miles in the United Kingdom was 10*s.* as against 5s. 6d. on German railways. The President of the Board of Trade, speaking in December, 1906, to traders stated that—

> "In the near future we shall have to consider the whole question of railway rates from beginning to end——"

> "I have been much impressed since I came to the Board of Trade with what one speaker calls the growing discontent with the whole system."

This discontent was still more accentuated when they considered the preferential transport tax exacted by the railway company which frequently gave the foreign producer a monopoly here to the exclusion of our own farmers. These preferential rates often enabled French fruit to find a ready sale upon the London market, when at the same time the high home rates compelled English farmers to let theirs rot upon the ground This applied to almost every kind of agricultural produce. He would quote some figures he had obtained from the valuable book on the subject written by the hon. Member for Denbigh District. The hon. Member mentioned the question of hops and all hon. Members must be conscious of the terrible injury inflicted on our hop farmers when some years ago hops were brought from Boulogne through Folkestone to London at 17s. 6d. a ton, when the price charged to the home producer was 35s. a ton from Ashford. Let them take barley. The charge for foreign barley from West Hartlepool to Mirfield was 10s. 2d. per ton, the charge for home grown barley was 18s. 4d. In the case of potatoes, the charge from Penzance to London was 45s. per ton, and that from Cherbourg 30s. per ton. The difference in the charges for potatoes from Spalding to London compared with the preference given foreigners equalled from 10s. to 20s. an acre in France, at the cost of English farmers. Formerly Spalding group rates were fixed at 9s. 2d., but competition brought them down to 7s. 2d. But a combination of the railways brought them up to 8s. 4d.; 150,000 tons per annum came from that region alone every year, and that meant that the increased rate took £15,000 per annum from the farmers. This was the grievance of agriculture with which the House sympathised and which he believed they would do their best to remedy. The present rate resulted in the lowering of the value of land by 4s. an acre, and that must come out of someone's pockets. Yet they found at this very time in St. Malo, Brittany, land had increased in value through the railways bringing produce from Brittany at the low rates they did. There had been a boom in land in Brittany and it had gone up in price. Let them take the case of cheese. He had before him a statement made before the Commissioners, which said—

> "The cost of conveying cheese by the London and North Western Railway from Chilford, Cheshire, to London was greater than bringing it from New York, all the way past the very station to London."

In fact the rate was actually less. *The Field* pointed out worse cases in 1894. The rate for imported butter, cheese, bacon, lard and wool, from Southampton Dock to London, seventy-six miles, was 6s. per ton. From Botley in same county a similar distance for all these goods, the rate was 19s. 2d., 219 per cent. more. The difference between Southampton Dock for foreign and Southampton Town for home was as follows:—Hops, foreign, 6s.; home grown, 20s. Apples, foreign, 5s.; home grown, 12s. 11d. Pressed hay, foreign, 5s.; home, 9s. 11d. Eggs, foreign, 6s. 8d.; home, 20s. Before the Commission on Trade Depression one of the Agricultural Commissioners declared that the Worcestershire farmers were prevented from selling corn in Coventry because of the exorbitant rates. What could traders and farmers do? Professor Hunter stated that while French fruit was charged 2½d. per ton per mile, 5½d. was charged to Kentish farmers. But there were many cases brought before the farmers' alliance where the railway company had charged far beyond the maximum rates. He would take, for example, guano and packed manure. From Petersfield to Nine Elms the maximum was 9s., but 12s. 6d. had been charged. To Wimbledon 13s. 4d. was charged, the maximum being 8s., and to Guildford, where the maximum was 4s. 1d., 9s. 2d. was charged. What could the trader do? What could the agriculturist do? What could any one person do against a great railway company? For a farmer or shopkeeper to attempt to contest these railway rates was to court disaster. One of the largest merchants in London who knew all about it and had been again and again before the Commission had told him "It is not the slightest use going on. We can do absolutely nothing. The railways are too powerful for us. They trample on us and we have to take it." That was the feeling in commercial circles. If they turned to poor Ireland it was worse than in England. It was cheaper to send cattle by road than by rail, and it was cheaper to carry goods to England and have them re-shipped to Ireland at through rates than to pay local rates. In March, 1903, in consequence of the outrageous increase of the railway rates, this resolution was passed in the House—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, the revised railway rates are most prejudicial to the agricultural and commercial industries of the country and this House urges upon the Government the necessity of dealing promptly and effectively with this subject."

The result was that a Select Committee was appointed two months later, and an Act was passed in 1904 handing over the task of finding a remedy to the Railway Commission. Could they honestly say that the Commission had found a remedy that took away the objection which the people of the country had? The result had been that for every shilling cut off the rate, it had been only too easy for the railway companies when they were in harmony to withdraw 2s. in facilities. Who was there in business who cared to quarrel with a railway company? He became a marked man. They had ways of dealing that made it most unfortunate for him. Professor Hadley said—

> "The railway companies can behave in an exasperating manner without endangering any of their well-recognised rights. Such impudence as was displayed by the companies in face of the early discussions of the railway companies would be almost impossible in America. But in the majority of cases it may be fairly said that, honestly managed, American corporations have really tried to conform to the requirements of Commissioners even before the courts have taken the steps to render such compliance necessary."

They could not say that of the English railways. The experience since the passing of the Act had confirmed that opinion. The Mansion House Association had brought a case on behalf of its members in Northampton, who urged that rates had been increased and should be reduced to the 1892 level. After two years delay and after costing some hundreds of pounds the railway company were defeated. Naturally traders imagined that this would be a test case, but what was the result? The railways in their easy confidence simply sailed away and said that anyone else could bring another action against them. For instance, the southern farmers through the Mansion House committee challenged the preferential rates at Southampton, and it cost them £2,000 to fight the railways. They were successful that time, but when it was remembered that there were over 200,000,000 separate rates, what chance had the public? If they contested one rate and won they could go on—he hardly liked to calculate how long before they brought justice to the people of England. But they were faced with another danger, the growing danger of railway combinations. Competition had broken down; amalgamations and working agreements were being arranged. Many of the companies had had their privileges granted them on the distinct understanding that they would be a help to the British public by competing with the old lines, and they could see the danger they were faced with as these railways amalgamated and competition ceased. The latest proposal was the Great Northern and the Great Central. The Central Chamber of Agriculture were protesting against it, and if the protest was successful they might be able to retain the liberty which was likely to be taken away from them. But there was little competition now left because they found that there were rate conferences. There was one rate all over England. If they wanted a special price from a railway company they found their prices were all alike. They found that the Great Western subsidised forty-one different lines and paid £146,000 per annum. The London Brighton and South Coast Railway paid the South Eastern yearly subsidies of £24,000 not to use their running powers to Eastbourne. They had had great hopes that the canal competition would keep railway rates down, but the railway companies had bought up the canals. The Great Northern Railway Company had entered into an agreement with the Witham Navigation Company for 999 years, and agreed to pay £10,545 a year for tolls on the condition that the tolls would be so prohibitive that there was a yearly loss of about £700. What was the remedy? They could not look for help to the railway companies. They were commercial undertakings. At all costs they must get their dividends. It mattered not to them whether trade went under. The directors had to face their shareholders and must earn dividends, regardless of how trade suffered. They had to work their men very long hours and did not give them too much pay. Practically they had to study dividends before the country's needs. They were overloaded with expenses. Twenty-three thousand miles of railway were owned by 213 different companies, with 250 boards of directors whose fees must come to something like half a million a year. The salary of the Minister of Railways in Prussia was not as much as the smallest board of directors in England. Then each line had its solicitors and engineers and a separate staff. The trucks went half filled and that was a very important item. The average load of a goods train in the United States was 173 tons; in Germany, 132; in France, 121; in Belgium, 96; and in the United Kingdom, 70. It had been estimated by the London and North Western Railway that the loss on working expenses resulting from divided management was 20 per cent. Working expenses alone amounted to something like £70,000,000, so that there would be a saving of £14,000,000 a year. What shorter hours they could give railway men and better pay, and yet have a handsome dividend to relieve oppressed agriculturists! With State ownership there would be greater uniformity. The service would be conducted with a sole eye to public utility. This had been done in Belgium and Germany. He was very much struck with the principles laid down by Bismarck when he advocated the acquisition of the Prussian railways. If they had those same principles before them they would be making a success of any step they attempted in this direction. First, that the railway tariff should be so clearly drawn that anyone could calculate freights; secondly, that all inhabitants of all parts of the country should be secured in equality of railway charges; thirdly, that the disadvantages which weighed down small producers should be eliminated; fourthly, that the unnecessary and therefore wasteful services should be abolished. They knew that this problem was a great one, and full of difficulties, but they had a President of the Board of Trade who had undertaken successfully and carried through the almost impossible task of reconciling two opposing factions, the directors who refused to recognise the men and the men who insisted upon being recognised, and had saved the country from disaster. If he would take up this question which had baffled statesmen in the past he would rally to his support the vast body of business men and agriculturists as a whole, the working men and all who would benefit by greater facilities and better arrangements. He begged to move.

MR. CHIOZZA MONEY (Paddington, N.) said it gave him very great pleasure to second the Resolution. He thought the House was very much indebted to his hon. friend for bringing this subject forward. This was a non-party question which they could discuss in the light of common sense and from a business point of view. It was a question of trade, and that rightly regarded must be a public question, for the interests of trade and the public could not be divorced. Surely a question like this must concern a British House of Commons. Railways were a British invention, and he thought there were grounds for the proposition that in no great industrial country had railways been of less advantage to the people than in the country which produced the inventors of railways. It should be remembered that the United Kingdom, consisting of two small islands, enjoyed tremendous natural advantages. At no point was the larger of the two islands concerned removed from tidal water at a greater distance than 100 miles. He would ask hon. Members to reflect upon the contrast which existed in this matter between the geographical position of the United Kingdom at the gates of Europe and our greatest commercial rival, Germany, situated in the very heart of Europe cut off by nature from tidal water. How had Germany survived those inherent natural disadvantages? Germany had surmounted them chiefly during the last twenty years by reason of the fact that she had used her railways for national purposes, and had developed them entirely with a single eye to the interests of German trade and the German nation. The marked progress which Germany had made in the last twenty years had been very largely due to the fact that her railways had been thus used. Although Germany was not concerned in the invention of railways, although they might go to Munich and find in its industrial museum not the original Rocket built by George Stephenson but merely a copy of it, it was nevertheless the fact that Germany this moment, at the beginning of the twentieth century, derived greater advantage from British railway inventions than the British nation. That was a proposition which could be supported by many conclusive arguments. Mr. Stephen Jeans, the Secretary of the British Iron Association said in his book on the British Iron Trade—

> "It would naturally be supposed that in a small country like Great Britain the cost of transport would be much less than in countries which, like Germany and the United States, are differently situated. Geographical conditions should be entirely favourable to this

country. But the natural advantages of our geographical position are not realised as they should be, because of the relatively high railway rates enforced."

It had sometimes been advanced as an excuse on behalf of our railway companies that they had acted as pioneers in the matter of railways. He would remind the House that George Stephenson's pioneer work was not only done in this country, because Stephenson himself was employed by the Belgian Government upon the Belgian State railways. Stephenson died in 1848, and four years before he died, in connection with the debates in this House which led to the passing of the Act to which his hon. friend had referred, Mr. Gladstone said—

> "I believe that the charges on the Belgian railways are not more than one-third of ours. Because this country is rich it is no sound reason that it should pay more than is necessary."

And then the right hon. Gentleman went on to say—

> "There is no likelihood that the great experiment of the greatest possible cheapness will be tried under the present system."

Those words were uttered by Mr. Gladstone in 1844, and speaking in February, 1908, he ventured to assert that those words were as true that night as when Mr. Gladstone uttered them. In a country that depended so much upon its trade with the world at large, which had to bring materials from over the sea and take them to the centres of industry at the cheapest possible price, railways might be truly said not merely to be distributive, agents but they were actually manufacturing agents, and the cost of the freights charged entered into every price quoted by a British manufacturer. If therefore, those freights were excessive; if those charges were as a whole greater than the charges levied by railways upon their commercial competitors, then he claimed they had allowed to be erected in this country great private taxing authorities which levied upon the trade of this country and upon every movement of material or manufactures made in this country a great tax in restraint of trade which tended to rob them of the advantages which they naturally possessed. He found from the Board of Trade Returns that in the year 1906 £58,000,000 were paid in this country for the privilege of moving goods over the British railways. For a comparison he turned to another country which had a population very nearly the same as our own, but a larger area, viz., the Kingdom of Prussia. He found that Germany for all purposes, whether for carrying goods, minerals or passengers, only paid £79,000,000, whilst this country paid £58,000,000 for minerals and goods alone. The total receipts of the British railways in 1906 came to £117,000,000, whilst their working expenses, including rates and taxes amounting to less than £5,000,000, came to 72·7 millions, leaving a net profit to the British railway companies in 1906 of £44,500,000. How did that compare with Prussia? He would remind the House that while it was undoubtedly important to compare British ironclads with German ironclads, it was also important to compare German railways with British railways and, he might add in passing, German schools with British schools. Whereas the British railway companies drew from this country in 1906 £44,500,000 net profit, the State drew in Germany a net profit of only £30,000,000. That was to say that in a country of a smaller population the State drew a net profit of £15,000,000 less than the British railway companies drew from the activities of the United Kingdom. His claim was that here there was a very great sum of money to be accounted for. It became more remarkable when they reflected that this princely profit of £44,500,000 sufficed only to pay a very small dividend on British railway capital. The explanation of small dividends went very near to the heart of the question, and the permanent officials at the Board of Trade obliged them every year with an account of some small share of the "water" added to British railway companies which in 1908 made it possible for a railway director in this House to state that that dividend was only 3 per cent. As a matter of fact, the Board of Trade pointed out very clearly with reference to one particular variety of water alone, that no less than £200,000,000 of capital had been added to the British railway companies' stock by manipulation to produce the gigantic total which was supposed to represent capital invested in British railways. Mr. MacDermot, of the *Railway News*, in his book on railways, said the published figures required considerable modification in view of the fact that the capital has been swollen of late years by nominal additions. Take, for instance, the Taff Vale Railway Company, which used to pay a dividend of 18 per cent. What sort of dividend did it pay now? Only 5, 6, or 7 per cent. The Taff Vale Company came to Parliament, and Parliament allowed it to call every £100 worth of stock £250 worth, and this was done by a stroke of the pen. Consequently, the large dividend disappeared and the small dividend appeared, and there was the excuse for the miserable set of rattling locomotives and carriages upon which he had the misfortune to travel only a few months ago. In view of these facts and many others he might mention, such as the fact that charges which ought to have been made against revenues were made against capital in order to swell dividends, in view of such facts as that in a notorious case the price of tarpaulins was added to capital—a curious case of tarpaulin letting in water instead of keeping it out; in view of these facts, need they be surprised that railway directors were able to rise in that House and state that the dividend paid by railway companies was only 3 to 3½ per cent.? Such a statement in view of the many varieties of "water" in British railway capital, some of which he had referred to, amounted not to interest but to usury. His charge against railway companies was that their dividends were not a proper charge upon materials and goods, but they amounted actually to a tax. He would ask the House to consider one or two instances out of many which he had collected, to show how the trade of this country was hit by these railway charges. Take the position of a Staffordshire iron firm which desired to get its goods to tidal water. The cheapest way was to take it to Liverpool at a cost of 8s. per ton to a railway company. Iron from Westphalia to Rotterdam, 156 miles, was carried for 6s. 4d. per ton, and from Westphalia to Antwerp for 7s. 6d. per ton. The charge for hardware from Birmingham to Newcastle, 207 miles, was 25s. per ton, but from Dortmund to Rotterdam, 153 miles, the charge was only 10s. per ton. Taking cutlery from Sheffield to Hull cost 20s. per ton, and the German State railways carried the same class of goods for 6s. 7d. per ton. Indeed, there were some articles like cheap chemicals, whereon the freight was often more than the value. These charges hit the small man as well as the large man. He mentioned the case of a Putney blind-maker who sold a blind worth £9 to a man in Liverpool, and the freight of which was £4. This case was brought into court, and the blind-maker said: "If such charges are allowed it would cripple my trade." The Judge gave the man his sympathy, but on law decided against him. There was a celebrated case about potatoes. A hundred tons of potatoes were shipped from Dundee to New York. When the ship approached New York it was found that the duty was so high that it it would not be worth while to land them. The potatoes were brought back from New York to Liverpool at a cost of 23s. 10d. per ton. If the potatoes had been sent direct from Dundee to Liverpool they would have cost 24s. 2d. per ton. What redress had a trader in view of all these things? His hon. friend had already shown what sort of redress he had. He could appeal to the Railway and Canal Commssioners. If he was rich and not very wise he could fight a case there, and if he was poor he could not fight at all. As illustrating what a railway company could do he referred to the treatment the well known firm of Messrs. Howard had received at the hands of the Midland Railway Company. That firm fought and beat the railway company, and immediately the company raised the railway rates to Bedford to punish the Messrs. Howard. But the Messrs. Howard did not take it lying down. They took a case before the Railway and Canal Commissioners who in deciding in favour of the Messrs. Howard described the action of the railway company as an abuse. A small firm could not have fought such a case at all. The practice of giving foreign producers a preference over British producers was one, as his hon. friend had pointed out, which Parliament had already tried ineffectively to control. It had absolutely failed, and considering the repeated failures for two generations of every attempt in this country to control the greed of private railway proprietors he would appeal to Parliament to end this matter by authorising the Government to assume the entire control of the railways. As to the question of owner's risk he would give a case which illustrated the whole gravamen of the case against the railway companies. A gentleman ordered a special tree for his garden and paid 5s. for it in a Midland town. The freight charge was 4s. 9d. Although the tree was well packed it was badly damaged on arrival, and the owner sent in a claim. The claim was returned as the tree was carried at owner's risk. The owner would like to know what the rate would have been if the tree had been carried at company's risk. Under the present management railway companies were able practically to force consignors to sign a note absolving them from any risk whatever. He contrasted our system with that of Germany where the State accepted full responsibility for goods lost, delayed, or damaged. A large sum of money was paid every year by the German Government to consignors whose goods had been lost or damaged in transit. The German railways were used with a single eye to the nation's benefit. Our traders were not able to stand the racket of the higher railway rates they had to pay and the preferential rates granted to foreigners. The German State railways were so managed that bounties were given in certain districts in order that they might be able to compete successfully with foreign countries. Special rates were granted for Westphalia coal to enable it to compete with British coal. In the case of the Levant and East African trade the German State railways granted special bounty rates to enable German traders to compete with British manufacturers in certain markets in regard to certain products. But in spite of those bounties being given, which, of course, reduced the profits of a German State railway, it still remained true that these railways made satisfactory profits. Further, the German State railways forwarded their shipbuilding and naval interests. Special freights were charged for shipbuilding materials to enable the vessels to be built more cheaply, and it was for that reason that shipbuilding in Germany now more nearly approached than ever before the prices in this country, which was of very serious import to our shipbuilding industry. Another point was that the German Minister for Railways, just because the State owned the railways, was able to help any part of the country which happened to be in distress. The area of Germany was very large, and one district might be visited with distress during a bad harvest. In 1891, in order to assist that, the grain freights were lowered; in 1893, special rates were given to fodder. In 1898–1899 there was famine in certain quarters caused by great floods, and half rates were charged for the carriage of food and fodder by the German State railways. Again, Germany had largely constructed her railways with relation to national defence, so that when that country embarked in war as a business operation as she did in commerce, she had in her railways a ready instrument for protective purposes. All this had been shown in a special Report on the subject prepared by the Hon. Robert Collier. Switzerland, which was a more democratic country than Germany, had profited very largely by means of the nationalisation of her railways in 1901. In the small number of years since then railway freights in Switzerland had been lowered, passenger fares lessened, the tracks improved, profits increased, while at the same time better wages and terms of employment and shorter hours had been given to the railway servants, and old-age pensions had been established. He would not trespass longer upon the House by entering at length into the larger question, but he might briefly point out that the position of British railways was obviously uneconomic. Their capital and labour was wasted in useless competition. They had not only thousands of directors, but the administration and management were duplicated over and over again. He instanced the shunting of wagons and the advertising as illustrations of the disadvantages which followed from private competitive management of the railways of this country. Hundreds of thousands of pounds were spent in advertisements in such newspapers as the *Sketch*, which having a United Kingdom circulation could only be of limited use to a local railway. The facts to which he had referred claimed the attention of all classes of the community. At a recent meeting of the Association of Chambers of Commerce, Lord Brassey had pointed out that we were on the eve of a great change of policy in regard to our railways; that they saw what was taking place on Continental Europe where the requirements of the public in regard to railway transport were fully considered, with a result which was at the same time satisfactory to the Exchequer of those countries where the railways were the property of the State. He hoped that the House would agree that the irresponsible and competitive management of our railways could not go on. It seemed to him as true now as when it was stated by a Parliamentary Committee in 1872 that the case of the public against the monopolist charges of the railway companies was a very strong one. It had been said by another Committee, that of 1846, that the railroads of the country were public concerns and as necessary to the people as the air they breathed. He reiterated that statement that night. Parliament had legislated again and again, without result in order to control private railways which were inherently monopolistic, and he appealed to the President of the Board of Trade to crown his brilliant term of office by putting the railways under national control.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in view of the widespread complaints on the part of traders, agriculturists, and the general public with regard to railway charges and facilities, and particularly with regard to preferential treatment of foreign goods, the time has come to consider how far these evils could be remedied by State purchase of the railways, as foreshadowed by the Railway Regulation Act of 1844."—(*Mr. George Hardy.*)

MR. BONAR LAW (Camberwell, Dulwich) said there was one point on which the two hon. Gentlemen who had just spoken were very firmly agreed, and that was the inherent imbecility of the present railway directors. That was shown by the mover of the Resolution, who asserted that railway directors thought only of their dividends and did not care in the least what happened to trade, apparently convinced of the idea that dividends had no connection whatever with trade. The results showed that they got only comparatively small dividends. The hon. Member for Paddington had attempted to make out that the dividends were colossal, but there the Board of Trade was against him. The Board gave the amount of water in those railways as far as it had been able to estimate it. It was £200,000,000 out of a total of £1,300,000,000. There remained £1,100,000,000. The profit was £44,000,000, and, therefore, the dividend was only 4 per cent., and not the colossal amount suggested by the hon. Gentleman. The hon. Member's idea of the stupidity of railway directors went further than that, but his idea that they would spend hundreds of thousands of pounds in advertising without finding by experience that advertising paid them was, he thought, one which no one except the hon. Member would entertain. The Resolution before the House was, it was true, generally in favour of the nationalisation of railways, but the wording of the Resolution and the two speeches to which they had listened put that desired change on the extremely narrow ground of the preference which was given to foreign produce as against British produce on our railways. There was a very general belief that that preference existed. He had heard of it long before he came to that House, and when, a few years ago, he was appointed to the Board of Trade, he believed that it did exist, and he had an earnest hope that it might be possible for him to assist the head of the Department to put an end to the evil which, if it did exist, was certainly impolitic. They looked into the matter, and they received many deputations, who all made complaints in general terms of precisely the same sort of thing of which they had heard that night. They tried to get specific instances, and when they did get them it was found in every case, without exception, that preferential rates did not exist.

He did not rely on his own experience only for this statement. Both hon. Gentlemen had overlooked the Report of the Departmental Committee which was appointed for the very purpose of inquiring into this alleged preference. That Committee was appointed not by the Board of Trade, the permanent officials of which were sometimes supposed, though there was no reason, he believed, for the suspicion, to be unduly partial to railways, but by the Board of Agriculture, the whole bias of which was in favour of the Resolution now before the House. That Committee gave everyone like the hon. Members who had spoken the opportunity of putting before them such grievances as were alleged to exist, and, at the end of a long inquiry, they gave a practically unanimous Report to the effect that this preference did not exist, and that, therefore, there was no need of any legislation to deal with it. There was no preference, but the foreign producer had advantages which enabled him to get his goods carried at a lower rate than were possible to the home producer. These advantages were inherent in the nature of the business. Foreign produce came in large quantities, and hence was carried at lower rates. But that was not a preference. The same preference applied to home goods carried in the same quantities. Therefore, if there were rigid uniformity of rates, it would not only upset the whole Parliamentary basis on which the railways were carried on, but it would be contrary to all business experience, which was that charges should in some way correspond with the cost incurred. The hon. Gentleman had pointed out the low rates given by German State railways. They were low rates, but the low rates on goods which came to this country were compensated for by higher rates on goods used in Germany. Germany deliberately used its railway system in order to force exports upon us, with the result that undoubtedly we got the goods cheaper. And, therefore, he would ask the hon. Member whether, if railways were not nationalised, he would charge lower rates for our export goods and higher rates for goods transported internally from one part of the country to another, so that people would have to pay more for them.

*Mr. CHIOZZA MONEY: German rates, in spite of the loss on the bounty rates, are lower than the ordinary rates charged in this country.

Mr. BONAR LAW said he had looked into that with some care, and he did not agree with the hon. Gentleman. They could not compare rates on the basis of the amount of railway miles that the goods were carried, as a large part of the cost to the railway depended on the terminal charges. From the nature of the case our terminal charges were out of all proportion to the length of the distances, and therefore our rates seemed higher in proportion to those of other countries than they really were. The moral which he drew was that, if they wanted to put the home producer on an equality with the foreign producer, the way to do it was not by insisting upon our railways adopting an unbusinesslike system, but to adopt a much more simple and much more effective course, and the effect of that more simple and more effective way would be this, that instead of enormous quantities of potatoes being produced in Brest, and raising the price of land in Brest, land would go down there and go up in this country, and then the hon. Gentleman would find that the larger quantities came from the British rather than from the foreign districts. But had he desired to advocate the nationalisation of railways he would have done so upon a much broader ground than the two hon. Members had adopted, and have taken the line that unnecessary competition had the effect of raising prices, and from that point of view a very great deal could be said in favour of the system. Nevertheless, he would not himself approve of it, and largely because he believed unnecessary competition could be put an end to without so drastic a change. He believed most strongly that private enterprise under equal conditions would always beat State enterprise. The motive lay in the mainsprings of human nature; that motive was personal energy, and it was based largely upon personal ambition. If they took that away they took away one of the strongest forces for progress. [A Labour Member: Does Tariff Reform rest on that?] He confessed the did not see the point of that interruption. It would be admitted that in some directions what he had said was true. Take, for instance, the War Office and the Admiralty. There never had been a war in this country in which there had not been an almost universal complaint that the business part of that operation had been badly done. That was true not only of our last war but of all wars. He had as high an opinion as anybody of the qualities of our civil servants, but business, like everything else, had to be learnt, and could only be learnt by experience. And the best kind of experience was the experience derived from the knowledge that if you made a mistake you would pay for it. That was a kind of experience which an official never could get. Let them establish a State system of railways, and there would be immediately another big concern like the War Office and the Admiralty. If the one was not managed well on business lines, how in the world could the other one be expected to be? His other reason was based on entirely different grounds, the effect of the adoption of such a proposal on our political institutions. The danger of all Governments was corruption, but there was corruption of different kinds, and the danger to which a democratic community would be liable would be introduced into every constituency if railway servants were to become the employees of the State. He would not enlarge upon this. Every Member would realise what the argument meant. He could not imagine there was anybody who had thought upon the subject who would not regard with something like horror the possibility of an organised body in every constituency putting pressure upon candidates for the improvement of their condition at the expense of their fellow-citizens. He admitted that the present position of railways was not satisfactory, but the ground upon which he arrived at that opinion was not that taken by the majority of Members opposite. It seemed to him, and he thought so in the last Parliament, there was far too much inclination to look upon railway companies as public enemies. The President of the Board of Trade last year made a statement which was obvious, but which might be repeated, for it could not be too much emphasised, that unless the railway companies had a fair chance of a return for their money they could not be kept up to the requirements of the day, and the public would suffer from a starving of the service. They had had an example that night of the kind of thing to which he referred. When hon. Members or groups of hon. Members opposed the progress of a Bill promoted by a railway company they opposed a Bill which would be for the public advantage, and every attempt of the kind added to the cost. The amount of money spent in getting railway Bills through Parliament was enormous; he had forgotten the amount, but it was a sum almost fabulous, and the money so spent was just as much capital used for the enterprise as if it were spent in construction. The House of Commons ought to avoid causing expense of this kind unless public advantage required it. He disagreed with the hon. Member who moved the Resolution. The real hope for the prosperity of railways, and upon that largely depended the prosperity of the trade of the country, was the doing away with unnecessary competition. Much of this competition was utterly wasteful, and among managers there was a strong movement on foot to put an end to it. He urged on the President of the Board of Trade that he should assist rather than retard arrangements of the kind. Many traders opposed such arrangements because they liked to exercise the pressure that competition allowed, and in doing so they often got facilities which represented to them far less advantage than the cost to a company. Somebody had to pay in consequence, and in nearly every case it was the public who paid in higher rates or diminished facilities. Undoubtedly it was the business of the President of the Board of Trade to see that every precaution was taken to prevent abuses arising from amalgamations and arrangements of that kind, but equally so it was to keep down competition that benefited nobody, and must be injurious to the whole community.

*Mr. PERKS (Lincolnshire, Louth) said he did not speak as a railway director, although for some years he was chairman of one of the London railway companies and he might say that he had not always been in accord with some of the directors of the railway companies, as to their relations either with their employees or the public. The mover of the Resolution in referring to the Act of 1844 omitted to state that the Act, passed when Mr. Gladstone was at the Board of Trade, contained a proviso that there should be no expropriation of a railway unless it paid to the proprietors a dividend of 10 per cent., and in those early days when railways were very speculative and the rates of interest higher than they were to-day, that did not seem at all an unreasonable proposition. He ventured to doubt whether more than two railways in this country had paid the dividend he had named. Neither of the two underground railways in London had a single penny of watered stock in their capital and one of them had carried more than the entire population of the globe in the last thirty years without any return whatever to the ordinary proprietor. That might not show much sense on the part of the proprietors, but it certainly showed the sacrifice that had been made for the benefit of London. He ventured to suggest that while there might be some considerable ground for complaints, as far as concerned the burden placed on agriculture and the trade of the country, and also the public, the remedy of State purchase suggested by the Resolution before the House was worse than the disease. It proposed that all the transport business of the country should be taken out of the hands of the private managers who had managed it for the last seventy years, and transferred to a State Department. The pecuniary obligations involved in this important proposition were enormous, yet no suggestion had fallen from the mover or seconder as to how they proposed to deal with the large amount of capital which after deducting the suggested amount of watered stock amounted to some £1,100,000,000. Mr. Gladstone once, in dealing with a similar proposal affecting another class of property, put an acute dilemma to a man to whom he was speaking on the subject. Mr. Gladstone said—

> "Do you mean to pay for it? If you mean to pay for it it is folly, if you do not mean to pay for it it is robbery."

That dilemma would have to be faced by men who suggested the nationalisation of railways. Another large class which had to be considered was the class comprising the railway employees and those dependent upon the railways, of whom there could not be less than a million in this country. What had been the effect upon labour of the transfer to the State of the Italian railways? He was in Genoa when the strike against the proposed reduction of wages by the Italian Government took place, and he saw women lying down on the lines in front of the trains which were coming out of the station so as to stop by that means trains running at all. It was highly problematical whether the transfer of the railways of this country to the State would mean the employment of a greater number of people, or whether it would mean a rise in wages. The effect not only in Germany but in Italy was directly the reverse. Another large section of the community not very popular in this House but one which had to be considered was the 600,000 or 700,000 railway shareholders. The railways in this country were not held by great magnates like those in the United States. The average holdings in the railways of this country were not more than £1,000, and when some of these stocks were quoted at 10 per cent. or 11 per cent., it would be seen that the holdings were small. A great deal of railway stock was held by friendly and insurance societies, and some was held by foreign investors who had thus shown their confidence in British railways, and the British Parliament. The foreign investors were persons who ought not to be lightly put aside. This Resolution, however, could not be regarded as an isolated step. It was part and parcel of a programme of nationalisation of land, and the transfer to the State of all means of production, distribution and exchange. It was because this was the first step in a programme which he believed to be commercially and socially unsound that he would oppose the last portion of this Motion. Applying the proposal to the London railways with which he was familiar, he concluded that it would not be possible to turn over those railways to the State without also handing over the tramways and all other means of distributing the public. And what applied to London applied far more to the provinces, even down to the carrier's cart which brought in from and took out produce to the villages. Four systems of handling railways existed in different parts of the world. State control as in Germany, Italy and Australia; partial State control as in France and Canada; private ownership as in the United States, and private ownership under Parliamentary control as in this country. If they compared the speed in travelling and the charges made the comparison would be found to be largely in favour of the privately owned lines. In regard to the Italian railways, Signor Crispi in a letter to *The Times* in December, 1906, said that the service had greatly deteriorated since the railways had been taken over by the State, and that there had been a heavy fall of revenue and incalculable injury done to the trade of the country by the delay of traffic. In the early days of the Argentine Republic—now one of the most progressive and stable Governments in South America—the railways were owned by the State, but that system had been almost entirely abandoned and the railways were now largely under the control of British managers, who had magnificently developed the resources of the country. Indeed, the State management of railways was almost invariably marked by failure, and in many of the countries it had been steadily modified or abandoned. If our privately managed railways were compared, in the matter of passenger service, with State controlled railways abroad, it would be found that the foreign railways were slower, dearer and afforded fewer comforts and facilities, especially with regard to third class passengers, who constituted 90 per cent. of the travelling public in this country. Let them take, for instance, the lines between London and Edinburgh. We had twenty trains a day running between London and Edinburgh, and third class passengers travelled by every train. An hon. Member below the Gangway wanted to go even further and to provide third class sleeping carriages. There were only seven express trains which ran between Paris and Marseilles as compared with twenty running between London and Edinburgh. There were fifty express trains a day going out of Paris in all directions—to Germany, Belgium, Austria, Italy, and various other places, and there were only four of these which carried third class passengers, whereas our trains carried third class by almost every train. Then let them mark the very slow delivery of goods on the Continent compared with the rapid delivery here. The arrangements for through rates and transit were most unsatisfactory on the foreign lines. There were many works in Alsace-Lorraine which could not get their coal and ore simply because the State railways refused to make through quotations. There were railways in this country which had made unfortunate speculations in connection with the outlay of huge sums of money. For example, out of £16,000,000 or £17,000,000 recently expended on the underground lines of London, at least £8,000,000 were at present wholly unremunerative. That was one of the risks which the nation ought not and probably would not undertake and the result would be that necessary lines would not be built. Another great railway had spent £6,000,000 or £7,000,000 in giving a new competitive service to London. Nearly the whole of that capital was unremunerative. A national system of railways would mean greatly increased cost. Great corporations could not trade and buy their raw material and carry on their enterprise as cheaply and efficiently as private traders. One of the best informed economists of France, M. Waddington, said—

> "French railways which are not exposed to competition, give the public fewer advantages than English railways, which have the full benefit of competition."

When the Prussian railways were taken over by the Government the Minister of Finance found it was an extremely satisfactory concern to the revenue, and he raised the rates in order to increase the revenue, and there was the greatest possible pressure brought to bear upon him in Parliament for the purpose of increasing or diminishing the revenue. It was perfectly clear that already the Government had its hands quite full. It could not undertake the control, management, administration, and construction of the railway system of the country. It would create a vast machine which could be used for political purposes and would not be always used in the interests of labour or the Liberal Party. It might be used by their friends for the purpose of carrying out the social programme which they so closely identified with tariff reform. He hoped the Board of Trade would be able to tell them that whatever the Government thought with reference to an inquiry as to a revision of rates or economies which might be effected by stopping useless services, His Majesty's Government did not intend to take a step in the direction of the nationalisation of our railway system without infinitely more consideration and thought than had been given to it in that two or three hours debate.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs) said he could assure his hon. friend that he was not rising on behalf of the Government to commit them to the nationalisation of railways. As a matter of fact the Resolution even as it appeared on the Paper did not seek to commit the House to that step; it was simply a suggestion that the time had arrived for considering the question of putting into operation the State Purchase Act of 1844. That was a very different proposition. It simply said that this matter had been inquired into two or three times already; it was forty years since the last inquiry was instituted, and it was suggested that the time had arrived when it might be profitable to inquire into it once more. That was the only proposition, as he understood it, which his hon. friend had placed before the House. He could not accept the form of the Resolution, but he would come to that later. He rather regretted that more time could not have been given to the discussion of what was a gigantic issue from any point of view, and the House of Commons could not be expected to express an opinion—in fact all shades of opinion could not even have the opportunity of giving expression to their views in the course of a three or four hours discussion. He thought it was a very useful thing that they should make a start in discussing the problem. He was more and more convinced since he had had the opportunity of coming into close contact with railway administration that it was one of the most important problems connected with the trade and commerce of this country, but it was not so simple a proposition as some hon. Members seemed to imagine. While he sympathised with a good deal that had been said, and while he admitted that hon. Members had made out a powerful case, he did not agree with them in their attack upon the railway companies. With the material at their disposal, and considering all the difficulties of the case, he believed that our railways were very ably managed in the main. The primary responsibility of railway directors, it must be remembered, was to their shareholders. Bearing this in mind, and having regard to all the difficulties, he thought they had done their best for the general public of this country. He agreed with the hon. Member for Paddington that there was a good deal of "water" in the capital, but not sufficient appreciably to affect the argument. He would remind his hon. friend that the real difficulty was not so much water as the land. If his hon. friend wanted to see the reason why railway rates were so much cheaper on the Continent than here, he must not place the responsibility altogether upon the railway directors and managers, nor even upon stockbrokers, because the House of Commons was largely responsible—he was not sure that it was not entirely responsible. Before they were allowed to get any privileges for the development of their lines railway companies had to go to a gigantic expense and spend huge sums upon experts and others before they could get a Bill through Parliament. Having, perhaps, after the third try, got their Bill through, they were allowed to go down into the country to buy a piece of land. What happened? The persons whose property was developed and whose property was enhanced in value by the transaction got ten times as much value out of it as the railway companies. It was a story of scandalous pillage from beginning to end. The extravagant costs of the land and the heavy expenses were sometimes increased by ludicrous conditions. The London and North-Western expresses had to slow down in passing a certain village to three miles an hour simply because that condition had been inserted by some landowner. These circumstances and conditions had so hampered our railways that it was no wonder they could not compete with the railways of Germany and other countries. The matter was a purely business proposition, a proposition for the nation to go into, and to mix it up with questions of prejudice against railway directors was, in his opinion, a mistake. It was quite unnecessary and created bitterness in the examination of a problem which was a business one. He did not agree with his hon. friend who spoke last that this was only part of the Socialistic programme of nationalising everything. His hon. friend knew that this was one of the very few countries in the world in which railways were not nationalised. Who were the men who had nationalised railways? The man who nationalised the railways in Germany hated and fought Socialism. Prince Bismarck was not a member of the Labour Party. Prince Bismarck considered the question purely from the point of view of the development of the interests of Germany. The thirty years experience of Germany had proved his plan a colossal success and a great financial success. Then, 40 per cent. of the revenues of Prussia were paid out of State railways, and the main part of the revenues of Saxony came from the State railways. Nobody had proposed that the railway investor should get less than the full market value of his securities. In Germany the railways had been used as an instrument for the development of German industry and for fighting against foreign industry; and a very formidable weapon it was—much more formidable, in his judgment, than tariffs. The hon. Member for Dulwich had made the interesting admission that he was apprehensive that the State's mixing itself up in business would lead to corruption—that pressure would be brought to bear upon Parliament in the interests of a class. He quite agreed with that, but he was not sure that it was confined to labour. He did not know that manufacturers were above bringing pressure to bear upon Parliament. The whole question really was whether there was any case for some inquiry into the present position of railways. He thought the railway directors themselves would admit that there were things that ought to be looked into. They had grievances. When they were settling the railway dispute the directors pressed two or three matters upon the consideration of the Board of Trade, and he believed they had grievances in regard to the acquisition of land for railway development, the conditions under which the law allowed the development of light railways, and the rigidness of the provisions of the Act of 1894 with regard to rates. He thought that more elasticity and flexibility in those provisions would be better for the railway companies, and also for the traders. But the traders also had their grievances. He did not say it was the fault of the railway companies. These grievances were largely the inevitable result of the present system. He was much surprised to hear the hon. Member for Dulwich challenge the case with regard to preference to foreigners. Several cases had come within his knowledge while he had been at the Board of Trade, in which there was no doubt that preference was given to the foreign producer over the home producer, through railway rates. He thought that in that matter agriculturists had a real grievance. The hon. Gentleman said that there had been an inquiry by a Departmental Committee into this question, and that the Committee reported against the case for preference. That was not the case. The Committee took a technical view of its reference. It took the view that it was commissioned to inquire whether there was preference within the meaning of the Act of Parliament. That was a very different thing. The Act said—

> "Any difference in the treatment of home and foreign merchandise in respect of the same or similar circumstances."

The Committee simply inquired whether within the meaning of the highly technical interpretation which the Railway Commission placed on the words "in respect of the same or similar circumstances," there was preference. They did not inquire into the broad question whether there was not a higher tariff for the home

Mr. Lloyd-George.

producer than for the foreign producer. The representative of the Board of Agriculture came to the conclusion that there was preference, though the majority of the Committee were of opinion that, within the terms of their reference, there was no preference. But the question had really never been investigated on its merits, and he did not think the hon. Gentleman could deny that there had been preference to the foreign producer. He was quite certain that if an inquiry was held on a broader reference, it would be found that there had been this preference, and he thought the time had certainly come for an inquiry into that particular matter. It would, he thought, be possible to remedy these cases of hardship by adopting some means of combination and of eliminating wasteful competition. The hon. Member for Dulwich admitted that there was a good deal of this wasteful competition, and that it was the duty of the Board of Trade to help and not to retard the elimination of that element. He agreed with the hon. Gentleman that there was a good deal of wasteful competition—trains running at the same hours to the same places, two-thirds empty, and running for purely competitive purposes, and the public had to bear the expense of that. More than that, there was the condition of the district where there was no competition at all to be considered. Where there were three or four lines of railway serving the same centre, the public would perhaps get fair play and good terms; but what happened where there was a district served by only one line, as was almost invariably the case in agricultural districts? In the large centres where there was competition the railway companies had been beating down their rates to the finest point, and an unfair burden was thrown on the districts where there was a monopoly, in order to meet the loss on the charges in the competitive districts. There ought to be an end of that sort of thing, and it could only be done by saving the railway companies from the evil effects of competition. But it must be remembered that the benefit must not be merely the benefit of the railway companies. Of that saving, whatever it might be—and he believed there might be an enormous saving of expense if the companies got rid of purely unnecessary competition—the districts which now suffered from excessive rates must have their fair share. He was not going to enter into the various grievances that came before the Board of Trade. There was no question on which they received a larger number of representations. They came from all parts of the country and from every class of trader, and the more he heard of them the more he felt that it was not the fault of the railway directors or managers, but of the present system. So long as they had the present system it would be impossible for them to work on any other lines than those on which they were now working, and those were lines which were detrimental to very large industries in this country. The hon. Gentleman had referred to the Italian railways, which he said were a bad example with regard to nationalisation. but since they were nationalised they had improved. They could not have got worse. That was actually impossible. There was only room for improvement at the time when those railways were nationalised, and they had improved. At the present moment they were engaged in considerable operations which would improve them still more. When they were private railways they were hopeless. Now, with State credit behind them, they were able to find capital, and they were really undertaking great works of improvement. The difficulty was that an inflated price had to be paid for them, and, therefore, they did not start under fair conditions; but they were improving nevertheless, and they would improve still more within the next few years. But let the House take the case of railways more or less similar to our conditions, for instance, that of Germany and Belgium. The hon. Member for Louth had referred to the Paris to Marseilles express, but after all that was a private railway; he quoted the case of a French railway, which belonged to a private company.

Mr. PERKS said he understood that that railway had a subvention from the State.

*Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE said that that was the very worst form of either nationalisation or private enterprise. They had got the evils of private management, and also of excessive public control; it was neither one thing nor another. The German and Belgian railways were used in the interest of the industries of those countries. He had taken the trouble to make inquiries into the working of the State railways in the industrial districts of Germany, and he must say that he had been amazed at the results of that inquiry which he intended to place in full in a Paper before the House. There was general agreement that the State railway administration, in spite of alleged defects, which he could not say were altogether favourable from a labour point of view, was far superior to the old system of private ownership and administration. Several merchants and traders spoke of the advantages they witnessed from, and the value of the co-ordination of railways in Prussia, and said that the uniform administration could not be too highly appreciated, or the services rendered by the Minister for Railways in establishing through rates and special rates for special industries, and in his readiness to meet the wishes of traders and manufacturers. One of his investigators recorded a conversation which he had had with English merchants trading with Germany, who all agreed that from their own experience the Prussian railways, in so far as railway rates were concerned, were directed with more regard to manufacturers' and traders' interests than was the case with regard to private English railways. There were three investigators, who carried out their investigations separately, and they were all agreed that in Germany the trader was perfectly satisfied; that he would no more go back to private ownership than we would go back to private ownership of the Post Office in this country. The German system was used as a very powerful machine for the purpose of helping and developing German industry. When that state of things existed in Germany and Belgium, for the House to say they would not inquire into the matter would, he thought, be a mistake. There had been two inquiries. One was an inquiry when Mr. Gladstone was President of the Board of Trade in 1844, by a Committee of that House, not merely into this question, but into the general question of the relations of the railways to the State. That Committee unanimously recommended that provision should be inserted in the Act of Parliament which would enable the State to resume the ownership of railways on certain terms. There was another inquiry in 1865, over which the late Duke of Devonshire presided, and Mr. Lowe and Mr. Ayrton were members of the Committee. A very influential Committee, they inquired, not merely into State purchase, but into the whole conditions of the railways, and, while expressing their opinion that it was inexpedient at that moment to put in force the Act of 1844 as regards any great scheme of State purchase, they by no means attempted to lay down any rule to guide the action of Parliament for an indefinite future. They decided against any great scheme of purchase under that Act of 1844, and assigned as their reason that it was of no use at all, and was not applicable to the circumstances of the present day. It was forty years since the last inquiry, and he thought the time had come for another inquiry into the whole question. The conditions had entirely changed since 1865. The question of State purchase was then a new one. The great State experiment in Germany had hardly begun; in fact, it only began about ten years afterwards. The experience of Belgium was also practically new, and so was the experience of other countries such as Austria, Denmark, Norway and Sweden. There was also another condition which the House would, he hoped, take fully into account. The railway companies themselves were beginning to realise that the present system was impossible. They were pressed for increased wages, shorter hours, cheap workmen's trains, whether or not they would pay as a commercial undertaking, for lower rates, and for greater facilities. The companies could not face all these demands under the present system. Unless the investor got a fair return for his money the railways would not get the capital necessary for essential developments. Increase of facilities and development of railway communication meant more capital, and these demands on the railways all meant raising more capital for the purpose. In addition to that there was the demand of the trader, which was after all th demand of the industries of the country. Between the two there was a real danger that the railways might be crushed. But the companies were coming together and making arrangements. What for? To stop competition. The hon. Member for Dulwich said that this army of canvassers, who went about touting for orders and quoting rates, could be stopped. But apparently they had the same schedule, and yet there were some advantages offered—exceptional facilities, or it might be discount. There were indeed many ways in which they could walk round the schedule. But the companies were stopping all that. The traders had enjoyed the advantage up to the present, but could get it no longer. Not only was competition being stopped, but there was another thing worthy of notice, the railway companies were beginning to make arrangements which were not far short of amalgamation. Up to the present the Report of this Commission was based on the assumption that free competition was a good thing, not in the interest merely of railways, but in the interest of the general public. When the trader benefited every class in the community benefited by free competition. They were coming to an end of free competition, and the sooner they realised this the better. The companies were arrayed in self-defence, and no one could complain of it. He thought that they were bound to do this, and as business men it was imperative on the railway directors to look to this as the only possible source of increasing their revenue. The hon. Member for Dulwich used the illustration of the War Office, but he would point out that the past complaints against that Department were largely due to the fact that the War Office had not been organised by business men. It had been run by swells, and if the railways were run in the same way the same results would follow. Perhaps there was even too much of the swell element in the railway companies. But if the railways were run as the War Office had been, the result, he was sure, would be identical. The railway companies were hardly a fair example of "the incentive of personal ambition." The trader who worked for himself felt that incentive. But the railway director was only working, like the official at the War Office, for a large body of men whom he did not know, and his remuneration was not of the kind to make him sweat over it. Those were purely War Office conditions.

MR. BONAR LAW: May I point out one difference? The railway directors are chosen for their qualities as business men.

***MR. LLOYD-GEORGE** said that he must congratulate the hon. Member on having perpetrated an excellent joke. Some railway directors were undoubtedly chosen for their business qualities; but there were many who were chosen for reasons of influence with the House of Commons and elsewhere, and the railway companies had also to look to that sort of thing as they had to defend themselves. But now competition was being eliminated by the railway companies themselves, and the time he thought had come for the State to inquire under what conditions they should allow that process to go on. He had to face a great problem. The Great Northern and the Great Central Companies had an agreement which was very desirable in many respects, as getting rid of waste. But the State and the community had a right to inquire where they came in. Such agreements would be multiplied, and therefore the time had come for a statutory inquiry. The Government would offer no resistance to the Resolution if the mover of it would consent to a slight alteration of form. He proposed to leave out the words: "State purchase of the railways as foreshadowed by the Railway Regulation Act of 1844," and to substitute for them the words: "Any change in the existing relations between the railways and the State." Those were the words used in the Report of the Commission of 1865, and they would enable an inquiry to be held into the whole of the conditions of the railway service. No inquiry would be useful that did not go into the whole question of grievances and the best method of arranging them and—the most practical question of the moment—the conditions under which the State should permit these agreements for amalgamation and co-operation between the railway companies. He begged to move the Amendment which he had indicated.

Amendment proposed to the proposed Resolution—

"To leave out the words 'State purchase of the railways, as foreshadowed by the Railway Regulation Act of 1844,' in order to insert the words 'any change in the existing relations between the railways and the State.'"—(*Mr. Lloyd-George.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Resolution."

*MR. G. A. HARDY: I think it would be quite well to accept that.

SIR F. BANBURY (City of London) said that, speaking as a railway director, he would be inclined to think that purchase by the State would not be a bad thing for the railways, but, speaking as a taxpayer, he thought it would be the worst thing that could possibly be brought about. He would have thought that the House had had enough to do with nationalisation or municipalisation since one of the most recent enterprises of that nature—the purchase of the London water companies—had been followed by the general raising of the water rates without any corresponding advantage.

Mr. G. A. HARDY rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put;" but Mr. SPEAKER withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.

SIR F. BANBURY said the moment the State became the proprietor of a big enterprise they must have a fine office, and in addition there was an immediate demand for the wages to be raised. Those were only two of the reasons why the Water Board had not been a success. His hon. friend below him had alluded to the policy of electoral corruption, and the right hon. Gentleman had rather laughed at it. The right hon. Gentleman was a man of very great ability, and he knew that tariff reform had nothing to do with this question, but he could not get over the fact that if something like 680,000 men were employed by the State the result of their vote might affect an election.

Mr. G. A. HARDY rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put;" but Mr. SPEAKER withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.

SIR F. BANBURY said the result of the railway being owned by the State in Victoria had been that special legislation had to be passed in order to deal with the votes of the employees, who were formed into one constituency and had a special representative. How long would hon. Gentlemen opposite tolerate such a state of things in this country.

And, it being Eleven of the Clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

INFANT LIFE PROTECTION.

Select Committee appointed to inquire and report as to the desirability of extending the provisions of the Infant Life Protection Act, 1897, to homes in which not more than one infant is kept in consideration of periodical payment, and of altering the limit of age prescribed by Section 2 of that Act.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of: Mr. Arthur Allen, Mr. Bright, Lord Robert Cecil, Mr. Ellis, Mr. Gulland, Mr. John Taylor, and Mr. Power.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum.—(*Mr. Whiteley*).

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.

Ordered, That the Committee of Public Accounts do consist of Fifteen Members.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of: Mr. Cavendish, Mr. Ashton, Mr. Bowles, Mr. Brigg, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Sir Daniel Goddard, Mr. Hazleton, Sir Robert Hobart, Mr. Leif Jones, Sir George Kekewich, Mr. Kettle, Mr. McCrae, Mr. Parker, Mr. Runciman, and Colonel Williams.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

HOME WORK.

Select Committee appointed to consider and report upon the conditions of labour in trades in which Home Work is prevalent, and the proposals, including those for the establishment of wages boards and the licensing of work places, which have been made for the remedying of existing abuses.

Ordered, That the Committee do consist of Twenty-one Members.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of: Mr. Arkwright, Mr. Bridgeman, Sir William Bull, Mr. Boland, Mr. Brunner, Mr. Chiozza Money, Mr. Devlin, Mr. Arthur Dewar, Mr. Fell, Mr. Gooch, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Mr. Ernest Lamb, Mr. Hugh Law, Mr. Massie, Mr. Masterman, Mr. Parkes, Mr. Richardson, Mr. Robinson, Mr. Stuart Samuel, Mr. Trevelyan, and Sir Thomas Whittaker.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Seven be the quorum.—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

SUPPLY [10TH FEBRUARY] REPORT.

Postponed Proceeding on Question, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the First Resolution, 'That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £100, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1908, for additional Expenditure in respect of the following Army services, viz.:—

Vote 5. Volunteer Corps, Pay, Allowances. etc.—

	£
E. (*a*) Grants for the Extinction of Debts - -	350,000
E. (*b*) Expenses of County Associations - - - -	8,000
	358,000
Less Surpluses on other Votes	357,900
	100' "

resumed—

Question again proposed.

And, it being after Eleven of the Clock, and objection being taken to further Proceeding, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

Second and subsequent Resolutions to be considered To-morrow.

Adjourned at five minutes after Eleven o'clock.

APPENDIX I.

PUBLIC BILLS

DEALT WITH IN VOLUME CLXXXIII.

Those marked thus * are Government Bills. The figures in parentheses in the last column refer to the page in this volume. "[H.L.]" following title indicates that the Bill originated in the House of Lords.

(A.) HOUSE OF LORDS.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Fatal Accidents (Damages) [H.L.]	*Lord Courtney of Penwith*	Read 1ª 3rd Feb. (438)
*Fatal Accidents (Damages) No. 2 [H.L.]	*Earl of Granard*	Read 1ª 10th Feb. (1303)
*Patents and Designs [H.L.]	*Earl of Granard*	Read 1ª 10th Feb. (1303)
Select Vestries [H.L.]		Read 1ª 29th Jan. (7)

(B.) HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Access to Mountains	*Mr. Trevelyan*	Read 1º 3rd Feb. (544)
Access to Mountains (Scotland)	*Mr. Bryce*	Read 1º 3rd Feb. (546)
Ballot Act (1872) Amendment	*Mr. Higham*	Read 1 4th Feb. (730)
Ballot Act (1872) Amendment (No. 2)	*Mr. Edward Dunn*	Read 1 5th Feb. (883)
*Children	*Mr. Herbert Samuel*	Read 1º 10th Feb. (1432)
Civil Bill Courts (Dublin)	*Mr. John Gordon*	Read 1º 5th Feb. (882)
Coal Mines (Checkweighers)	*Sir Walter Foster*	Read 1º 3rd Feb. (544)
Coal Mines (Eight Hours)	*Mr. Jenkins*	Read 1º 3rd Feb. (543)

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Commons	*Sir John Brunner*	Read 1° 10th Feb. (1432)
Copyhold Enfranchisement	*Mr. Winfrey*	Read 1° 3rd Feb. (546)
Coroners' Inquests	*Mr. Higham*	Read 1° 4th Feb. (730)
Coroners' Inquests (Railway Fatalities)	*Sir Francis Channing*	Read 1° 4th Feb. (729)
Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act (1887) Repeal	*Mr. Haviland-Burke*	Read 1° 3rd Feb. (542)
Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Amendment	*Sir Edward Tennant*	Read 1 6th Feb. (1106)
Dairies (Scotland)	*Mr. Gulland*	Read 1° 10th Feb. (1430)
Daylight Saving	*Mr. Robert Pearce*	Read 1° 4th Feb. (731)
Divorce Law Amendment	*Mr. Bottomley*	Read 1° 10th Feb. (1431)
Dogs' Protection	*Sir Frederick Banbury*	Read 1° 6th Feb. (1106)
Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland)	*Mr. M'Crae*	Read 1° 3rd Feb. (545)
Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland) (No. 2)	*Mr. Smeaton*	Read 1° 6th Feb. (1106)
Ecclesiastical Disorders	*Mr. M'Arthur*	Read 1° 3rd Feb. (540)
Education (Local Authorities	*Mr. Henry Walker*	Read 1° 3rd Feb. (541)
Education (Provision of Meals) (Scotland)	*Mr. T. F. Richards*	Read 1° 3rd Feb. (544)
Elections and Registration (London)	*Mr. Dickinson*	Read 1° 3rd Feb. (543) Second Reading adjourned 7th Feb. (1233)
Elementary Education (School Attendance)	*Mr. Walter Rea*	Read 1° 3rd Feb. (546)
Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge)	*Mr. William Edwin Harvey*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (882)
Exportation of Old Horses	*Sir Howard Vincent*	Read 1° 3rd Feb. (545)
Feus and Building Leases (Scotland)	*Mr. Findlay*	Read 1° 4th Feb. (730)
Foreign Trawlers Regulation	*Mr. Williamson*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (882)

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Franchise and Removal of Women's Disabilities	*Sir Charles Dilke*	Read 1° 3rd Feb. (545)
Highways	*Mr. Gill*	Read 1° 6th Feb. (1107)
Hours of Labour	*Mr. Thorne*	Read 1° 11th Feb. (1548)
House Letting (Scotland)	*Mr. Murray Macdonald*	Read 1° 3rd Feb. (542)
Housing of the Working Classes (Ireland)	*Mr. Hogan*	Read 1° 3rd Feb. (541)
Infant Life Protection	*Mr. Staveley-Hill*	Read 1° 4th Feb. (731)
*Land Values (Scotland)	*The Lord Advocate*	Read 1° 6th Feb. (1107)
Larceny	*Sir John Dickson-Poynder*	Read 1° 6th Feb. (1106)
Law of Distress Amendment	*Mr. Arnold Herbert*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (882)
Licensed Premises (Election Days) Closing	*Mr. Charles Roberts*	Read 1° 3rd Feb. (546)
Liquor Traffic (Local Option) (Scotland)	*Mr. Cameron Corbett*	Read 1° 3rd Feb. (543)
Local Government Qualification (England and Wales)	*Dr. Shipman*	Read 1° 3rd Feb. (546)
Local Government (Transfer of Powers of Standing Joint Committees)	*Mr. Trevelyan*	Read 1° 4th Feb. (730)
Malicious Injuries (Ireland)	*Mr. Muldoon*	Read 1° 3rd Feb. (542)
Merchandise Marks	*Sir Howard Vincent*	Read 1° 3rd Feb. (545)
Open Spaces (Scotland)	*Mr. M'Crae*	Read 1° 3rd Feb. (545)
Parliamentary Elections (Disqualification Removal)	*Mr. Marnham*	Read 1° 3rd Feb. (544)
Payment of Jurors	*Mr. Lloyd Morgan*	Read 1° 10th Feb. (1432)
Police Superannuation	*Mr. Samuel Roberts*	Read 1° 4th Feb. (731)
Police Superannuation (Scotland)	*Mr. M'Crae*	Read 1° 3rd Feb. (544)
Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs)	*Mr. Guinness*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (883)

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Polling Districts (County Councils)	*Mr. Acland Allen*	Read 1° 16th Feb. (1431)
Poor Law (Ireland)	*Captain Craig*	Read 1° 3rd Feb. (542)
*Post Office Savings Bank	*Mr. Buxton*	Read 1° 3rd Feb. (546)
Public Rights of Way	*Mr. Winfrey*	Read 1° 3rd Feb. (543)
Railway Tickets	*Mr. Morton*	Read 1° 10th Feb. (1431)
Registration of Clubs (Ireland)	*Mr. Sloan*	Read 1° 3rd Feb. (541)
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday	*Mr. Perks*	Read 1° 10th Feb. (1432)
Scottish Land	*Sir Edward Tennant*	Read 1° 4th Feb. (730)
Sea Fisheries Regulation (Scotland)	*Mr. Morton*	Read 1° 10th Feb. (1431)
Shops	*Sir Charles Dilke*	Read 1° 3rd Feb. (542)
*Small Landholders (Scotland)	*Mr. Sinclair*	Read 1° 6th Feb. (1107)
Sweated Industries	*Mr. Toulmin*	Read 1° 3rd Feb. (540)
*Telegraph (Construction)	*Mr. Buxton*	Read 1° 4th Feb. (729)
Town Tenants (Ireland) Act (1907) Amendment	*Captain Donelan*	Read 1° 3rd Feb. (543)
Unemployed Workmen	*Mr. Whitwell Wilson*	Read 1° 3rd Feb. (541)
Valuation (Ireland)	*Mr. James O'Connor*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (881)
Waste Lands (Ireland) Improvement	*Dr. Ambrose*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (882)
Whale Fisheries (Scotland) Act (1907) Amendment	*Mr. Cathcart Wason*	Read 1° 6th Feb. (1106)
Women's Enfranchisement	*Mr. Stanger*	Read 1° 3rd Feb. (541)
Workmen's Compensation	*Mr. Hyde*	Read 1° 10th Feb. (1431)

APPENDIX II.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, SESSION 1908.

LIST OF RULES, ORDERS, &c., which have been presented during the Session, and are required by Statute to lie for an appointed number of Days upon the Table of the House.

Title of Paper.	Date from which the Period runs.	Period to lie upon the Table.
Board of Education,—Copy of Amending Order No 3, amending Final Order No. 42, made under Section 11 (8) of The Education Act, 1902 [2 Edw. VII., c. 42, s. 11 (8)]	29 January	30 days
Universities of Oxford and Cambridge Act, 1877 (Cambridge),—Copy of Statute made by the Governing Body of Peterhouse or St. Peter's College, Cambridge, on the 4th May 1907, altering and amending Statute XXI. of the Statute of the College [40 and 41 Vic., c. 48, s. 49]	29 January	12 weeks
Universities of Oxford and Cambridge Act, 1877 (Oxford),—Copy of Statute made by the Governing Body of Trinity College, Oxford, on the 27th May 1907, altering and amending Statute I. of the Statutes of the College [40 and 41 Vic., c. 48, s. 49]	29 January	12 weeks
Universities of Oxford and Cambridge Act, 1877 (Oxford),—Copy of Statute made by the Governing Body of Queen's College, Oxford, on the 19th June 1907, altering and amending Stat. Tit. II., Clauses 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, and 15, and Stat. Tit. XXIII., Clause 8, of the Statutes of the College [40 and 41 Vic., c. 48, s. 49]	29 January	12 weeks
Shop Hours Act, 1904,—Copies of Orders made by the Councils of the Boroughs of Macclesfield, Widnes, Haslingden, Burslem, Cheltenham, Rawtenstall, Thornaby-on-Tees, Shoreditch, Stepney, the County Boroughs of Halifax and Preston, the Urban Districts of Tunstall and Llanelly, the Counties of Lancaster, West Suffolk, Chester, and the West Riding of Yorkshire, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the Hours of Closing for certain classes of Shops [4 Edw. VII., c. 31, s. 3 (3)]	29 January	40 days
Shop Hours Act, 1904,—Copies of Orders made by the Secretary for Scotland providing for the early closing of certain Shops in the Burghs of Dundee and Perth, and in the Shettlestone and Tollcross Special Lighting District, in the county of Lanark [4 Edw. VII., c. 31, s. 3 (3)]	29 January	40 days
Universities (Scotland) Act, 1889 Ordinance,—Copy of University Court Ordinance No. XXII. (Edinburgh, No. 11) (Regulations for Degrees in Arts) [52 and 53 Vic., c. 55, s. 20]	29 January	12 weeks

LIST OF RULES, ORDERS, &c.—*continued.*

Title of Paper.	Date from which the Period runs.	Period to lie upon the Table.
Universities (Scotland) Act, 1889 (Ordinance),—Copy of University Court Ordinance No. XXIII. (Glasgow, No. 6) (Regulations for degrees in Arts) [52 and 53 Vic., c. 55, s. 20]	29 January	12 weeks
Factory and Workshop Acts (Dangerous and Unhealthy Industries),—Copy of Regulations, dated 28th August 1907, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in pursuance of Section 79 of The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, for the processes of Spinning and Weaving Hemp or Jute or Hemp or Jute Tow, and processes incidental thereto [1 Edw. VII., c. 22, s. 126 (3)].	29 January	40 days
Factory and Workshop Acts (Dangerous and Unhealthy Industries),—Copy of Regulations, dated 13th December 1907, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in pursuance of Section 79 of The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, for the manufacture of nitro- and amido-derivatives of Benzene, and the manufacture of Explosives with use of Dinitrobenzol or Dinitrotoluol [1 Edw. VII., c. 22, s. 126 (3)]	29 January	40 days
Factory and Workshop Acts (Dangerous and Unhealthy Industries),—Copy of Regulations, dated 20th December 1907, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in pursuance of Section 79 of The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, in respect of processes involving the use of Horsehair from China, Siberia, and Russia [1 Edw. VII., c. 22, s. 126 (3)	29 January	40 days
Public Records (High Court of Justice),—Copy of Second Schedule containing a List and Particulars of Classes of Documents belonging to the late Court of King's Bench Common Pleas and Exchequer Divisions of the High Court of Justice which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office [40 and 41 Vic., c. 55, s. 1]	29 January	4 weeks
Public Trustee Rules, dated 29th November, 1907 [6 Edw. VII., c. 55, s. 14 (2)].	29 January	30 days
General Prisons (Ireland) Act, 1877, and The Prisons (Ireland) Act, 1907,—Copy of Order in Council approving of Rules made by the General Prisons Board for the government of ordinary Prisons in Ireland [40 and 41 Vic., c. 49, s. 57 (c)]	30 January	40 days
Shop Hours Act, 1904,—Copy of Order made by the Urban District Council of Omagh and by the Council of the County Borough of Londonderry, and confirmed by the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, fixing the Hours of Closing for certain classes of Shops [4 Edw. VII., c. 31, s. 3 (3)]	30 January	40 days
Intermediate Education (Ireland),—Copy of Time Table of Examinations for the year 1908 [40 and 41 Vic., c. 66, s. 6].	30 January	40 days
Factory and Workshop Acts (Particulars of Piece Work Wages) (Brass),—Copy of Order dated 23rd Septmeber 1907, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, applying the provisions of Section 116 of The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, with modifications to Factories and Workshops in which the mixing, casting, or manufacture of Brass or of articles of Brass is carried on [1 Edw. VII., c. 22, s. 126 (3)]	30 January	40 days

Title of Paper.	Date from which the Period runs.	Period to lie upon the Table.
Factory and Workshop Acts (Fruit Preserving),—Copy of Order dated 11th September 1907, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in pursuance of Sections 41 and 58 of The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, prescribing conditions to be observed in Factories and Workshops in which women or young persons are employed in the process of cleaning or preparing Fruit, in pursuance of the special exception allowed by Section 41 [1 Edw. VII., c. 22, s. 126 (3)]	30 January	40 days
Shop Hours Act. 1904,—Copy of Order made by the Council of the County of Lancaster, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the Hours of Closing for certain classes of Shops within the urban district of Ashton-in Makerfield [4 Edw. VII., c. 31, s. 3 (3)]	30 January	40 days
Education (Scotland),—Copy of Minute of the Committee of Council on Education in Scotland, dated 4th February 1908, providing for special Grants-in-Aid of certain School Boards in Scotland [35 and 36 Vic., c. 62, s. 67]	4 February	One month
Universities of Oxford and Cambridge Act, 1877 (Oxford),—Copy of Statute made by the Governing Body of Christ Church, Oxford, on the 23rd October 1907, altering and amending Statute XVI., Clauses 19 and 20, of the Statutes of the House [40 and 41 Vic., c. 48, s. 49]	5 February	12 weeks

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TO THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

[AUTHORISED EDITION].

FIRST VOLUME OF SESSION 1908.

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Where in the Index * is added with Reading of a Bill, or a Vote in Committee of Supply, it indicates that no Debate took place on that stage of the Bill, or on that Vote.

Subjects discussed in Committee of Supply are entered under their headings, and also under Members' Names, without reference to the actual Vote before the Committee.

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  Nason Estate—Case of Mrs. M. Eagan, *Feb. 11*, 1517.

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